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MEMOIR OF JOHN BISHOP ESTLIN, ESQ., F.L.S., F.R.C.S.

FEW men have passed from earth more deeply loved and honoured than Mr. Estlin. A full delineation of his life and character would be a valuable contribution to our biographical literature; but we can here, of course, present only an imperfect record of him, shewing, with tender and respectful reverence, his faithful devotion to God and love to man. Yet our brief sketch of one in whom the beauty of holiness was so conspicuous, and the memory of whose manly and elevated piety is a precious treasure to be sacredly preserved, will, we are sure, be acceptable to our readers.*

JOHN BISHOP ESTLIN was a native of Bristol, and was born in December, 1785. His father, the Rev. Dr. Estlin, was a highly-respected minister in the Unitarian body, and for nearly half a century one of the pastors of the influential congregation assembling in Lewin's Mead chapel. In addition to his pulpit duties, Dr. Estlin conducted a school of considerable reputation. In it were educated many who afterwards attained distinction in the universities, in the learned professions, and in Parliament. He was greatly beloved and venerated by his pupils.

Mrs. Estlin was a woman of a generous and enthusiastic disposition, possessing cultivated tastes and brilliant conversational powers; and the home of which she was the centre was one of cheerful piety, intelligence and refinement. It was visited by many friends eminent for their literary and scientific attainments. Dr. Priestley, Mrs. Barbauld and the eloquent Robert Hall,†

* We trust nothing will occur to prevent the preparation of a more extended Memoir of Mr. Estlin, by one who alone possesses that full knowledge of his inner life and of his public labours which would be needed for this purpose. Such a work we know is earnestly desired, and would be gratefully received by his numerous friends; and it could not but prove deeply interesting and instructive and permanently valuable.

† Robert Hall, in the earlier part of his ministry, was a man of very liberal spirit. He preached several times for Dr. Estlin, and it is an interesting fact that his celebrated sermon on Modern Infidelity was first delivered in Lewin's Mead chapel. In 1791, Mr. Hall published his powerful tract, "Christianity consistent with a Love of Freedom." In that beautiful piece of writing, he declared that though he differed greatly from Dr. Priestley in religious opinion, he would not suffer any difference of sentiment to diminish his sensibility to virtue or his admiration of genius.

were among the welcome guests at Dr. Estlin's hospitable abode. There Coleridge and Southey were frequent visitors, and there, in all the freshness of opening manhood and early genius, they unfolded their theories and plans for the regeneration of society.

Under influences, therefore, very favourable to the culture and development of his mental faculties and of his moral nature, were the childhood and youth of John Bishop Estlin passed; and he early acquired that correct taste, that love of justice and freedom, that sense of individual responsibility, and that desire of goodness and excellence, which were through life distinguishing features of his character.

Having completed his preliminary studies in his father's school, he entered upon his medical course, in the beginning of the present century, by an apprenticeship to Mr. Maurice, of Bristol. He subsequently attended at the Bristol Infirmary, where he was the pupil of Mr. Richard Smith, one of the first surgeons in the city. He next went to the metropolis and studied at Guy's Hospital, where Sir Astley Cooper was entering upon his career of fame as a teacher of anatomy and surgery. In the early part of the year 1806, he became a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons of London. After this, he proceeded to Edinburgh, where he remained nearly two years, and became a Member of the Royal Medical Society of that city, and also of a more private society, called the "Azygotic," with which that distinguished ethnologist, the late Dr. Prichard, and others who attained considerable eminence, were also connected.

The course of medical instruction through which Mr. Estlin passed was unusually long and complete, and it was pursued with all that care and attention which, in one so conscientious and with so true a love of his profession, was sure to lead to excellence. A well-furnished and accomplished mind, and an intimate acquaintance with the science of medicine, were the reward of his diligent student-life.

In the year 1808, he established himself in his native city, where he gradually obtained a large general practice, and laid the basis of that reputation which not only gave him a high position amongst his medical brethren in Bristol, but enabled him to take his place with the first surgeons of the age. Mr. Estlin's personal qualities, as well as his attainments and ability, were such as admirably adapted him for the profession to which he was devoted. His calm and dignified manners, his benevolent countenance, his kind and gentle demeanour, commanded respect, and at the same time inspired confidence and attachment. Never, perhaps, was a medical man more really beloved and trusted by his patients. His presence in the sick room was always hailed with gladness. The suffering felt that he understood the art of healing, and that, if it rested with human power to remove pain and disease, his resources would be equal to the

emergency. The desponding invalid was conscious of the sustaining, invigorating influence of his cheerful presence and hopeful smile, and found his visits not only useful to the physical frame, but a solace to the worn and wearied spirit. The afflicted, sorrowing family welcomed him as a friend, always certain that, when no effectual relief could be administered to the sick or the dying, the utmost reliance might be placed on his truthfulness and candour, and that, under all circumstances, his judicious counsel and his sympathy would be generously afforded. Easy would it be to fill a volume with the expressions of grateful attachment and regard which he received from those with whom he had been associated in the most solemn and critical scenes of life, and from those who had been raised from a bed of sickness by his skill and care. It is, indeed, difficult to determine whether he was most valued when, in his peculiar office, he prescribed for the body, or when he became the physician of the mind,—strengthening the sufferer for endurance, suggesting thoughts of comfort, and speaking words of peace.

Although Mr. Estlin was an able practitioner in every branch of medicine and surgery, his name is more especially connected with the successful treatment of ophthalmic diseases. These diseases, so distressing in their nature and serious in their consequences, were, when he began to direct his attention to them, but little understood. He may be regarded as one of the pioneers in this interesting and most important department of his profession. Nor is it too much to say, that for the more accurate knowledge of complaints of the eye, and of the proper mode of dealing with them, which is at present enjoyed, the world is greatly indebted to his habits of patient observation, his careful record of the numerous cases that were brought under his notice, his professional correspondence, and his able literary contributions on the subject.

It is not always possible to determine with certainty the particular circumstance which induced an individual to enter upon the path which has conducted him to well-merited fame. But, in this instance, we have the means of ascertaining it. In the year 1809, Mr. Estlin was called to attend an old man in humble life, residing at Clevedon, a village within a few miles of Bristol, who for about nine years had been afflicted with cataract in both eyes. On this aged person Mr. Estlin performed his first operation for cataract; and it was successful. The case, as may be well imagined, deeply interested him. His remarks upon it, from day to day, shew how completely, even at that early period of his career, he entered into the nature of the disease, with what vigilance he noted every fresh symptom, the sense of responsibility under which he acted, and the thankfulness he felt when he saw that he had been made the instrument, under Providence, of restoring to his patient the blessing of

sight.* From this time he made diseases of the eye his peculiar study, and it was pursued through every change of life and variation of health, with ever-increasing interest and efficacy. His celebrity as an operator spread rapidly, far beyond the limits of his own neighbourhood, and brought to him persons from all parts of the United Kingdom, and even from other countries. And truly affecting was it, during the last two years of his life, to witness the sorrow and disappointment of numbers who came to seek his aid, when they learned that his hand had lost its wonted power to afford relief.

Under a deep conviction that talent and influence were not bestowed on him merely to enrich or raise himself to distinction, Mr. Estlin determined that the poor should gratuitously participate in the means of usefulness which God had placed at his command. With this purpose, he established, in the year 1812, a Dispensary for the cure of complaints in the eyes.† There, week after week, during a period of forty years, in the midst of the exhausting labours of his daily practice, he was found at the appointed hours‡ tenderly examining, operating upon, and prescribing for, the humblest and most destitute, always treating them with the same patience, sweetness of temper and kindness of manner, by which he was characterized in his professional intercourse with the great and the wealthy. It was no ordinary work to establish, and to carry on with energy and success, a medical charity of this kind, by his own unaided exertions. He not only bestowed the entire medical advice and surgical treatment, but managed the finances of the institution. This he did with such discreet economy, that a parallel case can scarcely be found on record in which relief so valuable has been so extensively afforded with such slender pecuniary resources. For the first fifteen months, all the expenses of the institution were borne by Mr. Estlin. He then procured assistance from his friends to enable him to continue the undertaking. It is really astonishing to observe, from the published accounts of receipts and expenditure, how moderate was the scale of finance on which the charity was conducted. A statement for the preceding ten years was printed in 1849, which is now before us, and from it we learn that the average yearly attendance of patients was 2192, of whom

* Mr. Estlin's last operation for cataract was performed on a lady between eighty and ninety years old. We were with him shortly after it had taken place, and remember how his countenance beamed with delight when he shewed us the cataract, and described the joy and gratitude with which his patient had returned to her reading and her usual occupations. Often and richly was he recompensed in this way during his long and happy professional career.

† In Frogmore Street, Bristol.

‡ The days of attendance were Wednesdays at one o'clock, and Sundays at nine. Sunday morning, before the usual hours of divine service, was fixed on by Mr. Estlin, in order that the poor might have an opportunity of obtaining that advice which, from the pressure of their daily avocations, they would have been unable otherwise to secure.

several had the whole or a portion of their expenses for board and lodging defrayed from the funds,—and that the annual income of £75. 5s. 10d. covered the expenditure, being at the rate of 8½d. for each patient. For a period of thirty-seven years,* with the interruption of twelve months, from a failure of health,† Mr. Estlin had the sole management of the charity, and gave advice and surgical aid to fifty-two thousand poor persons! He kept an accurate register of the several cases, and has confidently stated that, out of the whole number of those who regularly attended, there were very few who were not either cured or relieved. “Thousands,” in his own language, “had their sufferings alleviated, and the danger of the loss of sight averted;” while numbers more were through his instrumentality raised from the depressed state of total blindness to the enjoyment of vision and the capacity of procuring their own subsistence. We do not believe that the annals of benevolence can furnish a more cheering instance of the value of individual effort. Without the help of any committee, or the excitement of public meetings and platform speeches, in a small house “in the dingy thoroughfare of Frogmore Street,” did Mr. Estlin carry on this labour of love. Had he left no other traces of his usefulness behind him, this one work would have well deserved the consecration of a lifetime, and it will remain a touching and enduring memorial of his active benevolence.

An accomplished friend of another country, in a communication received since Mr. Estlin’s death, refers to this Dispensary as “an institution so admirable in conception and execution, that it should be classed with those works of poetry and philosophy which ‘men do not willingly let die,’”—and observes, “It is interesting and most edifying to read the clear, full, simple, but very closely condensed, statement which Mr. Estlin presented, from year to year, to those whom it concerned—(such as he might occasionally call upon for the small additional funds required in carrying on the charity). A foreigner, comparing the great numbers treated with the yearly amount received, might glance over this little sheet without coming to any other conclusion than that it was the report of the working of some great piece of government machinery. He might conclude from the accounts, that government had expended some fabulous, unacknowledged sum upon a favourite charity. But he would warmly congratulate government on having found an officer capable of discharging such an immense amount of duty. No-

* From 1839, Mr. Estlin had the able assistance of his nephew, Mr. Augustin Prichard, who had before been his pupil. During the last two years, the professional charge of the charity has devolved exclusively on Mr. Prichard, by whom it will continue to be conducted, we feel assured, with no inferior skill, and in the same purely benevolent spirit with which it was instituted.

† During this time it was attended by his friend and partner, Mr. Harrison.

thing in the whole report would enlighten him, though all but the one thing is told, that all this time, strength and skill, spent for forty years in giving sight to the poor, is the life-offering of one man! No government is rich enough to buy such a service to humanity."

In the year 1819, Mr. Estlin married Miss Bagehot, of Langport, a lady whose well-cultivated mind and many virtues made her in every respect a suitable wife and companion for such a man. She is described by one who knew her well,* as being possessed of mild humility, of steady and discriminating judgment, of rational and influential piety, and of well-disciplined affections; and as blending with these the mild graces of the female character, its thoughtful kindness, its tenderness and its gentleness. His union with one so good, so enlightened, so peculiarly fitted to adorn his home and to appreciate his worth, seemed all that was required to complete his happiness. He entered upon his domestic relations with the brightest prospects, and for a brief period enjoyed a larger share of felicity than commonly falls to the lot of man. A friend of both said of them, that "few, perhaps, have ever been so truly united as they were. Their hearts, their faith, their hopes, were one." But in the fourth year after their marriage, Mr. Estlin was called to mourn the loss of her with whom all his most cherished hopes were associated. This great affliction came upon him in the prime of his manhood. How powerfully it affected his future days and exalted and purified his character, will be seen from the following touching sentences, penned in reply to a communication from one, now no more, in which there had been an allusion to his sorrow.

"You give me no pain by your reference to an event in my life, to which every other appears insignificant. Though it is one to which in conversation I have never been able to allude with the dearest friend, it exerted too great an influence upon my life ever to be long out of my thoughts. The only discomfort your recurrence to the circumstance occasions me, is your giving me credit for resignation, while there exists such an impossibility that any human being should know how I supported myself under this intense affliction, and while I have such doubts how far I was sufficiently resigned to the awful, but, I am well assured, the *wise* will of Heaven. At the expiration of two years after the event, I was conscious (though the cloud was in reality beginning to clear) of very little improvement in the prostrated state of my mind and body. Yet, amidst my too deep regrets, and too vividly and voluntarily remembered scenes of happiness, passed away for ever, I never for a moment doubted the fitness and the wisdom of the stroke, and never ceased to pray that the weight of it might not be withdrawn from me until it had accomplished all the purposes of Providence respecting me. The blessings, too, remaining to me, I did not fail to dwell upon. But in the peace and capacity of mind, and in the innumerable blessings since granted to me, I have subjects of gratitude far beyond what I have in

* The Rev. Dr. Carpenter. *Monthly Repository*, Vol. XVII. p. 188.

any way merited, and infinitely beyond my powers of acknowledgment. I cannot look back to the past without believing, without feeling, that the trial has been valuable to me; if there be presumption in the assertion, let me be humbled by the conviction, how much less the good effect is than it ought to have been."

It was in the midst of his grief from the separation on which he thus dwells, that Mr. Estlin wrote his admirable Letter on the Duty and Efficacy of Prayer. It was penned in answer to some remarks of a correspondent in the *Monthly Repository*,* who objected to the petitionary part of devotion, and contended that, as all the phenomena of the universe, material, intellectual and moral, are the invariable result of the general laws of nature, no answer to supplication could, properly speaking, in these days, be given. Against this view Mr. Estlin felt called upon to enter his decided protest. He forcibly points out the presumption of asserting, in our present state of ignorance with respect to the mode of the Divine government, that any end may not be produced without a departure from, or an interruption in, the fixed laws which God has ordained; and shews that there is nothing irrational in supposing that our prayers may be some of the means appointed by the Deity to bring about particular ends. He then proceeds to observe how clearly the duty of prayer is defined and commanded in Scripture, and sanctioned by the example of Christ and his apostles. He dwells on the high privilege of being permitted to pour out our hearts to God, to seek his assistance, and to ask his guidance and blessing. And it is very evident what solemn recollections prompted the following earnest appeal on behalf of prayer,—prayer offered in the belief that men may come into real communion with God, that He has promised to hear their cry, and made provision for helping them in their hour of need.

"While we remain in the present scene of trial, exposed to pain and sorrow, to temptation and sin, . . . let us not be denied the encouraging permission of supplicating from our Heavenly Father that guidance which his frail and erring children so much require. And when anxiously watching the bed of sickness, while the messenger of death appears hovering over the form of one to whom our hearts are united by the tenderest sympathies of nature,—or when, unable to avail ourselves of any more earthly aids, we gaze upon the seemingly fast-closing eyes of him whose life is dear to his friends and important to the world,—in moments like these, oh! let us not be refused the sweet consolation of praying with earnestness, but with perfect resignation to the whole of our Father's will, that the threatened affliction may be averted."†

Mr. Estlin was left with one child, who was "too young to

* Vol. XV. pp. 23—28. The Letter was afterwards published in the Appendix to Dr. Carpenter's excellent Discourse on Divine Influences; and it has since been extensively circulated in the form of a tract.

† On Prayer and Divine Aid, by John Bishop Estlin, F.L.S., pp. 10, 11.

know her own calamity" in being thus early deprived of her mother's care. She was spared to reward her father's affection by her love and devotion, and now survives him with precious memories of his character and life, thankful for all that he was permitted to do for herself and for others, and that, with his mind still unclouded by disease, and his heart full of his own deep benevolence, he has been summoned to that world on whose light and joy no shadow falleth.

The blight that came upon his feelings and hopes in the midst of his days, did not prevent Mr. Estlin from vigorously co-operating, whenever he had an opportunity, for the promotion of human improvement. With the large demands which were made upon his time by his numerous professional duties and charities, he might have been well excused if he had confined himself entirely to these engagements. But such was not his habit. In his busiest hours he found leisure for working with his beloved friend and pastor, the Rev. Dr. Carpenter, in the establishment of the Bristol Institution, gave valuable courses of lectures in aid of its funds, and prepared articles of deep interest for the meetings of its Literary and Philosophical Society. Nor was it only for the gratification and instruction of the rich and well-informed that he laboured. When popular education was violently opposed, on the ground that diffusing knowledge amongst the masses would render them discontented with their position and callings, Mr. Estlin came forward and gave the weight of his influence to the support of associations in which working men might obtain useful information by means of books and lectures, and defended them against the objections and misrepresentations to which they were exposed from the attacks of ignorance and bigotry. He gave lectures at the Bristol Mechanics' Institute on Optics, Atmospheric Pressure, and other scientific subjects. And it is interesting to notice, in the printed reports of these lectures, how constantly he closes his observations with advice especially calculated to meet the temporal and spiritual wants of his hearers.

A severe trial was sustained by Mr. Estlin, in the year 1825, in the death of his brother Edward, a young man of the fairest promise, who had made unusual proficiency in the study of medicine and surgery, to which he had given himself with enthusiasm. He had been Mr. Estlin's pupil, and was regarded by him as his future partner. But again his expectations were disappointed, and again he bowed his head and said, "The will of the Lord be done!"

Mr. Estlin never enjoyed robust health. In the year 1832, when the prevalence of cholera caused extra demands upon his time and strength, he was attacked by a disease of the lungs, which it was feared might terminate in consumption. After five months of illness and entire suspension of his duties, he was

induced to try the effect of a residence in a warm climate, and accompanied some friends to the island of St. Vincent. He sailed at the end of December, 1832, taking with him his daughter, and his pupil, the present Dr. Carpenter. The change of air and repose were beneficial to him, and he returned in the month of June, 1833, much improved in health.

Whilst at St. Vincent, his attention was naturally drawn to the subject of Slavery, and in his letters and memoranda made on the spot there are frequent references to the slaves, their condition and their prospects, which shew that even then his thoughts were occupied with the great question which was destined, during the latter years of his life, to be so constantly upon his mind and so much in his heart. But at that time he had not sounded its depths as he afterwards did. He beheld slavery, probably, in circumstances as favourable as any under which it could be witnessed. His impression was, that the physical condition of the slave, as seen by him, was superior, in many respects, to that of large numbers of the poorer classes of his own countrymen. But he maintained that the moral evils of the system were far greater than he had conceived. He was told by a gentleman who had long resided on the island, and who had never been a slaveholder, that great improvement had taken place in the state of the negroes, but that this was almost entirely owing to the efforts of the Anti-slavery Association.

In the autumn of 1833, soon after Mr. Estlin's return from St. Vincent, the celebrated Rajah Rammohun Roy visited Bristol, and was the guest of Miss Castle, at Stapleton Grove, near the city. Here this "Apostle of Hindostan," this great moral and spiritual reformer, whose learning and character would have conferred lustre upon any age and country, was seized with fever, which in a few days issued in his death. In his dangerous sickness, which came upon him at a time when it seemed essential to the diffusion of pure religion in the distant land of his nativity that his life should be prolonged, Mr. Estlin was summoned to attend him. But his own health was far from re-established, and his friends urged him not to expose himself to the solicitude and danger connected with the care of such a patient. He heard the appeals of those who loved him, and was not insensible to their force and kindness, but calmly replied that he had considered the course of duty, and that if he must lose his own life in the endeavour to preserve that of the gifted stranger, he was prepared to make the sacrifice.

With returning strength he again readily contributed his services to the cause of benevolence. In the Bristol Asylum or School of Industry for the Blind he was greatly interested. From the year 1837, he was an active member of its Committee, and laboured in various ways to promote the mental and physical well-being of its inmates. He especially exerted himself in the

establishment of an uniform system of embossed printing for the blind, a work in which the Bristol Asylum has taken the lead.

He joined one of the first Temperance Societies established in Great Britain, and endeavoured in various ways to promote its objects. He was never a member of the Total Abstinence Society, from the belief that he could thus exert greater influence when in his professional capacity he enforced the importance of abstaining from intoxicating liquors. But the movement had his warm sympathy and generous support, and he availed himself of every opportunity that offered to extend its principles.

In the year 1838, Mr. Estlin was brought prominently before the medical world by an interesting circumstance in the history of Vaccination. For a long time the infecting power of the vaccine virus universally employed, which was transmitted from the original stock obtained by Jenner from the cow, had been diminishing. In common, therefore, with many other medical men, Mr. Estlin was seeking for an example of the disease among cows, for the purpose of obtaining a fresh supply of lymph for inoculation. He instituted diligent inquiries in the neighbourhood of Berkeley, where Dr. Jenner first discovered the cow-pox, and in a farm within a few miles from this place he learnt that the disease had reappeared. He promptly visited the farm, and procured a supply of the virus. He lost no time in perpetuating the stock and disseminating it amongst the members of his profession. It has now superseded to a great extent the old impoverished lymph, and thus the efficacy of vaccination, which has proved of incalculable benefit to the human race, was renewed. This event led to an extensive correspondence, and to the publication by Mr. Estlin of the result of his observations upon cow-pox, in the *Medical Gazette* for the years 1838 and 1839.

Believing that it is the duty of Christian congregations to provide religious instruction for those whose destitute or degraded condition has placed them beyond the ordinary ministrations of the sanctuary, he took an active part, after the visit of Dr. Tuckerman to Bristol, in calling into existence the Lewin's-Mead Domestic Mission Society, and for many years presided at its annual meetings. He was also one of the founders of the first Ragged School in his native city. In this work he had the co-operation of Miss Carpenter and other friends; but without his own energetic support and encouragement, the school could hardly have been established. He not only consented to become its Treasurer, but went evening after evening, during the first winter of its existence, to aid in the management of the rough and undisciplined children and youths who crowded there to receive instruction. And all this, it should be remembered, was not done without great effort on his part. Some persons derive positive pleasure from being actively engaged in undertakings of this

nature, and really delight in the excitement and occupation thus afforded. But with Mr. Estlin it was always an irksome duty, a sacrifice of needed rest; and had he consulted his health and inclination, he would have devoted such leisure as he could command to the enjoyment of his own home, and to the indulgence of his literary tastes and scientific pursuits. But he was never influenced by personal considerations. What he ought to do, was the point to which his mind was directed; and when once he saw the course he should take, he never hesitated to pursue it.

His interest in the subject of American Slavery began in the year 1843. In that year, the Rev. Samuel May, of Leicester (Mass.), visited this country, and his presence at a meeting of the Western Unitarian Association, where a discussion arose concerning American Slavery, led to an Address from nearly three hundred Unitarian ministers of the United Kingdom to their brethren of a like faith in the United States, beseeching the latter to be faithful in bearing their testimony against the sin of slaveholding. This movement caused Mr. Estlin to examine carefully into the actual state of American Slavery, and the conduct of Christian churches in relation to it. The Life of Dr. Follen revealed to him the painful fact, that the ministerial position and usefulness of that admirable man were seriously injured by his zeal as an abolitionist. The study of other books and papers convinced him of the merciless character and demoralizing influence of slavery in America. He was amazed that any one professing Christianity, and especially a Unitarian minister, who emphatically recognizes, as a matter of faith, the paternity of God and the brotherhood of the human race, could be silent under the cruel wrongs which slavery inflicted. He mourned over what he thought to be the unfaithfulness of most of the leading members and pastors of the churches of his own religious connection in the land of Channing. In his view, the anti-slavery feeling of England, too, had become culpably cool, under the sectarian and prejudiced administration of the British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society; and he sought to revive and turn it into a right direction by the diffusion of correct information. To this end, he entered into a large correspondence, sent forth papers and tracts from the press, generously contributed his money, conversed freely on the subject with influential persons, established and mainly supported a monthly periodical (the "Anti-slavery Advocate," which is still doing good service), and encouraged meetings at his own house as often as occasion offered of intercourse with American abolitionists. The amount of work he did in this field of labour, would be incredible to those who are not aware of his quiet perseverance, methodical habits and wise economy of time. There can be no doubt that a large amount of the vital, healthy anti-slavery action now put forth in England, is to be traced to his exertions. His name in

relation to this cause is perhaps better known in America than amongst us. The best friends of the slave in that country were Mr. Estlin's friends. Mr. Garrison, Mrs. Chapman, Miss Weston, Mrs. Follen, Miss Pugh, Mr. M'Kim, and Mr. Pillsbury, were successively his guests, and several fugitive slaves were also partakers of that hospitality for which he was remarkable.

Nor did he ever grow weary of anti-slavery labour. A striking letter from his pen has just appeared, addressed to the Secretary of the British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society, on resigning his membership in that body for what he deemed its serious derelictions from fidelity to the true interests of the cause, which letter was published in the July "*Anti-slavery Advocate*," having been forwarded only the day before his fatal illness. And he was in the midst of a circle of friends at an anti-slavery committee, assembled by his special desire in his own house, when he heard the voice which summoned him from his work on earth to his reward in heaven.

But the Anti-slavery enterprise did not wholly engross Mr. Estlin's mind. It could never be said of him that he was a man of one idea. Whilst thinking anxiously about the condition of the captive abroad, he was equally mindful of what was passing at home. Rejoicing in the establishment of the Penny Postage, which he regarded as a measure of great national importance, one affecting the poor far more than the rich, Mr. Estlin, in the commencement of the year 1844, originated a "*National Testimonial to Mr. Rowland Hill*," the author of this inestimable boon. Although he, after much laborious effort, succeeded in getting his plan taken up and carried into execution, he always considered that the amount collected fell far short of what the occasion required.

Did our limits permit, we might mention numerous additional instances in which his services were given to the furtherance of objects affecting the welfare of society and the progress of his race. But enough has been written, we trust, to leave something like a just impression upon our readers of the many excellences combined in his character. He was blessed with a finely-balanced understanding. In him were united great clearness of conception, rare comprehensiveness of mind, and a more than usual soundness of judgment. His natural temperament rendered him averse to noise and strife. As a citizen, he was never found amidst party conflicts. But he was always ready to avow and maintain his convictions, whether on political or social questions, and invariably carried into all he said and did the behaviour of the gentleman and the spirit of the Christian.

Mr. Estlin was a man of uncommon generosity. Many are the testimonies to the delicate consideration with which he adjusted his professional charges to the circumstances, and yet to the feelings, of his patients, or of their survivors and friends, and number-

less are the instances in which he could not be persuaded to accept any remuneration for his services. When he had acquired a fortune sufficient for his moderate wants, and to provide for those who had claims upon his care and affection, he did not labour to amass wealth, nor did he cease from professional exertion and retire to enjoy the repose to which he might have been deemed entitled; but all that he gained he thenceforth appropriated to charitable uses. Pecuniary assistance was indeed never given by him without consideration and inquiry; but when once a benevolent object commended itself to his judgment, his subscription was certain to be contributed. Though he was a man of deep feeling, he never acted from impulse. His philanthropy was a settled principle, as well as a warm and powerful sentiment. He was a cautious, but never a timid man. He had a great contempt for anything like quackery. Some of his friends, ardent advocates of progress, but who have not enjoyed his thorough scientific education, have thought him too conservative of the old landmarks of his vocation, and have complained of the severity with which he commented on the pretensions of Mesmerism, Homœopathy, Phrenology, &c. But he expressed his opinions regardless of animadversion; and if he were sometimes a little impatient of those who appeared to him to be rashly hastening to conclusions for which there were no sufficient premises, it was because he knew the danger of ignorance and imposture, and wished to guard others against them.* There was about him, too, a constitutional reserve and delicacy, which prevented any great familiarity in approaching him. Yet he had a genial disposition, which fitted him for enjoying and contributing to the pleasure of social intercourse, and an affectionate nature, which made him one of the best of fathers, the kindest of relatives, the most agreeable of companions, and the truest of friends.

It is often said of medical men that, as a body, they are indifferent to religion. We should be very unwilling to admit the truth of this charge. It appears to us incredible that persons with their knowledge and experience can be generally unconcerned about the highest and grandest of all themes. Their studies and occupations, from their very nature, seem more calculated than those of any other profession, not excepting that of the Christian ministry itself, to produce serious thoughts of life and death, of God and immortality. But whatever may be the case with the majority of his profession, it is one of our most treasured recollections respecting Mr. Estlin, that he was a firm and devout

* Some articles of his on Mesmerism, and an Address delivered by him at a meeting of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association on this subject in the year 1845, were published in the *Journal of that Association*, and afterwards circulated in separate form. They contain much important information, and comprise the arguments adduced in support of and in opposition to this doctrine.

believer in the gospel. He had diligently examined the evidences, and perfectly satisfied his mind of the divine origin of Christianity. And on this foundation he fearlessly rested his hopes for eternity. The study of Scripture was from early youth the habit of his life. His busiest days had some portion set apart for devotional reading* and meditation. In illness, a much longer time was daily devoted to these subjects, and his latest thoughts were employed in pondering the truths and promises of revelation. Only three days before he died, he expressed to the writer of this article, with a clearness and force that will never be forgotten, his unwavering faith in Christ as the divinely-commissioned and supernaturally-endowed Son of God, and declared that in the religion of Jesus alone could he himself find a solid basis for virtue and morality, and a satisfying assurance that the grave leads to endless life.

The readers of the *Christian Reformer* are well aware that Mr. Estlin's religious opinions were those held by Unitarian Christians. He was educated in them, and they appeared to him, after a careful investigation of the sacred records, to be true and divine. He consistently avowed them through life, never shrinking from any obloquy or inconvenience to which their profession exposed him. But he was a man of catholic spirit, and loved good men of all churches—some of his warmest friends were of so-called orthodox communions. Still he was never ashamed of his Unitarian name and principles, defending them on every suitable occasion with his voice and his pen. Notwithstanding his extensive practice, he was a regular attendant at divine service in the house of prayer with which he was through life associated. He did not decline official posts in the congregation, which were urged upon him when occasions of difficulty arose, rendering his prudence, wisdom and uniting influence, especially valuable. But the publicity of these offices was uncongenial to him, and the pressure of other duties led him to reserve himself for such emergencies as we have described.

The various educational and benevolent institutions of his own religious society, as well as the more general objects and associations of our denomination, were liberally sustained by his purse; nor did he ever refuse them his personal advocacy when he felt that a word from him on their behalf would be useful. He has presided over more than one of the annual meetings of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, and frequented the anniversaries of the Sunday-School Association, Christian

* A little volume, Corbet's *Self-employment in Secret*, was much valued by him, and he always strongly recommended its use to others. It was presented to him by Dr. Carpenter in the vessel in which he sailed for St. Vincent, and has been his daily companion for more than twenty years. The volume bears the marks of long and constant use. It has been re-bound, but pasted on the inside of the cover is the original leaf, on which is written, "To a faithful Friend, from Lant Carpenter. 29 December, 1832."

Tract Society, London District Unitarian Society and Domestic Missions, to all of whose funds he generously contributed. Regarding an educated ministry as essential to the permanence and real usefulness of our churches, he has bequeathed a sum more than equal to his annual subscription in support of Manchester College. Public speaking was distasteful to him, but he rose when his voice was needed, and his speeches were always earnest, concise, effective, and in the right tone and spirit. His last public address was delivered at the annual meeting of the London District Unitarian Society in May, 1853, and the preceding one at a meeting of the friends of the Ministers' Benevolent Society, the plans of both which Institutions he earnestly desired to aid in carrying out.*

The *Inquirer*, at an early period of its history, owed its continued existence to an earnest appeal in its behalf put forth through Mr. Estlin's exertions to the Unitarian public. He has often been a contributor to the pages of the *Reformer*, and his articles will be found to possess that elegance of composition which he acquired in early life, and by which whatever proceeded from his pen is distinguished.

The deep sense of responsibility under which Mr. Estlin formed his decisions regarding the doctrines which divide Christian believers, is manifested in many papers which he has left, all preserving traces of his careful examination of controverted texts, both in the English version and in the original Greek of the New Testament. Many of his patients and friends were at different times solicitous for his spiritual safety, and made strenuous efforts for his conversion. His replies constitute a mass of very valuable matter, which well deserves to see the light, in elucidation and defence of Unitarianism.

To a friend who had written to him respecting the opinions embraced by Unitarian Christians, he observes,—

"I was educated in these opinions, but I do not hold them because they were impressed upon me in early life. Certainly I have had the opportunity of hearing and reading and otherwise knowing about other views, and I hope I have not neglected to pay attention to the arguments in support of various creeds. My convictions of the truth of Unitarianism are not only strong, but I feel most grateful to God that I have been permitted to entertain them; not from any presumptuous certainty that they must be right and all other opinions wrong, but from a thorough, though I hope humble, assurance that they are most accordant with the teachings of Scripture, the dictates of Reason, and the perfections of God; and because I see in them sources of comfort and support, promises of direction and assistance, satisfaction in the present life and hopes for a future, which I believe no other set of opinions so amply possesses."

* Before these speeches could appear in print, he had been seized with an illness which closed his public labours, and cut short the active engagements of his life.

To a relative who had expressed some anxiety respecting his state during an illness, he replies,—

“Gloomy I ought not to call a prospect which represents death at no great distance. I am not afraid of death. And this I say without the least sense of deserving, by any merits of mine, the favour of God. It is upon the unbounded love and goodness of God that I rely for acceptance, and it is with the full persuasion that he orders everything for the best that I look resignedly to the future.”

In reply to one who had kindly thought of him, and spoken of his religious opinions with some anxiety, he remarks,—

“Approaching as I now am to the natural limit of human life, and seeing in the Christian world such a preponderance of persons holding opinions very opposite to mine, I am necessarily frequently led to reflect upon my religious convictions, to examine their foundations, to consider the support they are calculated to afford me in my last hours, and what reasons for them I can render hereafter to God. And on such reviews I feel most grateful for the privilege of being able to regard the Supreme Being as the One only true God, unequalled, undivided, the self-existent Jehovah, to whom alone religious worship is due; and his beloved Son, Jesus Christ, as his ‘servant,’ his ‘messenger,’ sent by Him to declare his will and mercy to mankind. I believe that I appreciate the purposes of Christ’s advent as he taught them. I do not think that his sufferings on earth could have had any influence in enabling or disposing his unchangeable and all-merciful Father to forgive. Conscious and ashamed of my lamentable deficiencies, and having no merits of my own to plead, I can only say, ‘God be merciful to me, a sinner;’ yet, relying on the assurance of our Saviour of his Father’s love, I can look with hope that he will accept my repentance if sincere, and not withdraw his favour altogether from me. Greatly as I may differ from my orthodox brethren as to the terms of salvation, I cannot yield to them a stronger belief than I have in the Christian revelation, and in thankfulness for the unspeakable gift of the gospel. But for this revelation, my hopes of a future existence would be very small. The natural arguments for it are to my mind far from conclusive. To the Christian revelation alone do I owe the assurance I feel, that the spirit (in man) is destined to an immortal existence—to one, I believe, of continued progress.”

Mr. Estlin in a striking degree combined the religion of the heart with the religion of the understanding. It was the business of his life to subdue inclination to reason, to regulate feeling by principle. But his affections were fervently exercised on religious objects. There was in him a spirit of love as well as a sound mind, and that truest evidence of genuine piety, the subjection of the thoughts, motives and wishes to the will of God.*

* How vital a thing religion was to him, may be seen from the following topics for daily meditation through a week, which we have copied from a well-worn paper, manifestly long used by him in his hours of retirement, and designed to aid him in the culture of holiness:

“S. Imitation of Christ.

M. Reference of every action to God; habitual obedience to His commands.

Tu. Watchfulness.

W. Humility of heart.

We do not represent him as a perfect character. Infirmary and sin, in this probationary state, will be found in the best of men. And from the extract relating to his inner life, we may learn that Mr. Estlin would have been one of the last to claim exemption from them. But we believe that few persons have kept themselves more unspotted from the world. Never, probably, was there a man who passed through a long public and private career with a name more entirely free from reproach. If testimonies were needed to the high estimation in which he was held, they might be adduced almost without number. But we cannot deny ourselves the satisfaction of giving a few passages from letters written since his death.

"I look back," observes the Rev. R. L. Carpenter, "with great tenderness on all my earliest associations with him. He and my father I supposed, as a child, to be faultless. I always associated him with the removal of sickness and sorrow, with kind looks and gentle words; and since I have become a man, how often have I felt indebted to him! How his affectionate sympathy soothed us when we lost my father! and how have we valued his aid in helping us to cherish whatever was beneficial in his influence!"

An eminent physician says,

"I shall ever cherish his memory as that of one of the clearest-minded, and kindest, and most Christian-hearted men I ever met with. His large and never-wearying philanthropy, in its best sense, requires no commendation from me. Its fame has gone out into the New World no less than into the Old."

One of his relatives, a clergyman of the Church of England, in referring to him, remarks,

"He has left behind him a character of goodness so high and unsullied, that all who knew him, even distantly, think of him with respect and a degree of affection. But how much greater a comfort it is to us, to feel sure (as we may without presumption) that this was founded on the love and fear of God and on faith in Christ, and was the work of the Holy Spirit preparing him for God's presence! I feel the strongest assurance of this myself, though differing from his belief on some important points, that he had wrought in him a Christian mind and heart, and rests, after his upright life, with God."

A gentleman of high scientific attainments thus alludes to his death:

"I feel the absence from our sphere of one true man. I thank God that I saw and knew him, for that fact will not remain with me barren of consequences."

A lady holding what are called evangelical sentiments writes, that his "life seemed a commentary on that of him who went about doing good."

Th. Love to God and Man.

F. Virtuous principles—purity of heart, moderation, temperance.

Sa. Piety; habitual devotion; trust in God—His way and word; spirit of righteousness and godliness."

One of our own esteemed ministers, who had worked with him in the field of anti-slavery effort, describes him as "one of the excellent of the earth," who "is gone to the reward of his faith and patience and love,"—adding,

"His memory will be very precious to many on earth, as his presence is welcome to many in heaven. Oh! may we all be permitted there to meet him and rejoice with him,—there, where the redeemed shall dwell with their Redeemer, and the wronged shall meet those who loved and laboured for them through long years of thankless toil and discouragement!"

Another respected minister of our body, who knew Mr. Estlin well in former years, refers to his death in these words:

"I grieve over it as much as I can grieve over any man whom I believe to have been ripe for heaven. He was one of the few instances that have crossed my path in life, of men that live scrupulously up to their religious principles and profession. To our Unitarianism he was an honour. In him it found an exquisite illustration. If we may judge of the tree by the fruit it bears, how good it is!"

In May, 1853, he was seized with a paralytic attack, depriving him of the use of his right hand, from the effects of which he never entirely recovered. It came upon him during a visit to London, whilst he was occupied with several benevolent objects, and especially in the promotion of a general literature for the blind. From that period he gave up all his professional duties, which he had for some time previously restricted to ophthalmic practice. His *hand* could no longer perform its accustomed office, but his *heart* was still warm and active in the cause of humanity, and his conversation was felt by those who had the privilege of enjoying it, to be more improving than ever. The way in which he received this dispensation will be best shewn in some words which he wrote in pencil to an intimate friend, with his left hand, within a month from its occurrence:

"My attack was alarming in its name—serious, certainly, as a warning, but was free from suffering. My mind was unaffected. My right hand, at first quite paralyzed, is now of use, though I cannot write with it. God has dealt gently with me. It is all for the best. I dare not wish anything different. I had long been exerting myself beyond my strength, and my course was checked by a dispensation in which I see much mercy. I hope I look calmly, certainly *trustfully*, to the future. Hoping for the best, preparing for the worst."

Henceforth, those who loved him, looked upon him as one whose time was near, and in writing to him, his friends often dwelt on the spiritual world to which he was hastening. "You will never cease to be interested in our anti-slavery struggle," said one, on the other side of the Atlantic, with whom he had for many years corresponded, "so long as you have strength to bestow a thought upon anything mortal; and when your mortal has put on immortality, then, I believe, with a new vigour and a far greater

devotion, will your spirit unite in every true word and work for the helpless and oppressed."

The letter from which the following beautiful sentences are extracted, was addressed to him, only a few weeks before he died, by Mr. Parker Pillsbury, a very dear American friend, who, during a perilous illness and a slow recovery, received in his house that skilful medical treatment and those priceless kindnesses to which, under God, he owes the preservation of his life, and whose reverence and affection for Mr. Estlin are almost unbounded. Mr. Pillsbury had been dwelling on the anxiety felt by so many respecting Mr. Estlin's health and life, and on the importance of his personal presence and aid to the cause of freedom and humanity; and he proceeds to remark—

"If ardent wishes and earnest prayers can avail to retain you longer with us, I am sure the time of your disappearance from the conflict is distant yet. But I should not consider you as no longer with us in the struggle, even if you had already passed the little dark stream that blind, weak and frightened human nature has misnamed Death, and in its own terror has crowned 'the King of Terrors.' It seems to me when a truly bad man becomes a truly good one, he passes through a far greater change than does a truly good man when he steps across the fancied line, which only, after all, is a line of latitude or longitude on the great globe of the universe. To me, death seems more a messenger than a monster—our Father's servant, his charioteer, sent to bring us, his absent children, home from this primary, this infant school, to be placed in some far higher department in the great seminary, where our education may be going on and on for ever and ever. Nor do I ever feel for a moment that we lose sight of the scenes that most engage us here. I believe that though we cannot see or feel the power or presence of our departed ones, they do see us, do influence us, and possibly may be a constant guardian-angel presence, watching almost our every footstep; so that even the departed wife and mother may still be a beautiful unseen, but no less real, inhabitant of that very home which, to human short sight, had been made almost desolate by her departure. And in this philosophy I find unspeakable consolation in this orphan world. It keeps my loved ones near me, who have been written down dead in the registries of earth. It makes God seem near too, as the ever-present, all-loving Father. It makes the world of humanity only a large family circle, the dead (as they are called) being but its absent members; and death becomes at most a visit to them, with scarcely any separation from those I leave behind."

More appropriate and comforting words could not have been penned, had the writer of them known that his venerated friend was so soon to be removed to the world of spirits. Mr. Estlin, indeed, felt (to use again the words of his friend, the Rev. S. May, whose letter we have already quoted) that "in all such imaginings we must ever come back to the conclusion that we know nothing, and can conjecture but little,—thankful that, as we are the creatures of One who is infinitely wise and good,

nothing can be so well for us as to be wholly and trustfully in His hands." But he admitted that there is something cheering and ennobling in the sentiment, that there is a mutual sympathy between the pure and good on earth and those in heaven,—the company of the visible and the invisible,—and he sent an assurance to Mr. Pillsbury that his words found an affirmative response in his own heart.

The manner of his departure was most merciful. He was spared the pain of a lingering illness. Having finished his course, and fought a good fight, and kept the faith, he was borne suddenly across the dark waters of death, to join the loved ones who had gone home before him, and to take the place prepared for him in the inheritance that never fadeth. In his own house, engaged in a labour of love, watched by her who was dearest to him on earth, calmly and peacefully, like the setting sun on a still summer eve, he closed his eyes upon the things of time to open them on the blessedness of eternity.

Mr. Estlin was so widely known and so much valued, that his death has called forth great sympathy. In all the Bristol papers, and in many metropolitan journals, the event was noticed, with honourable mention of his professional and philanthropic services, his amiable character, and his incorruptible integrity. His funeral was conducted in accordance with his own express directions. The following memorandum was appended to his will :

"Anxious to mark my disapproval of the absurd waste of money that usually takes place on the occasion of a funeral (money which in many cases can be ill afforded to be thus squandered), I especially direct that my funeral expenses (exclusive of any sum necessarily employed about the family vault, for a leaden coffin, or for travelling should I die from home) shall not exceed *twenty pounds*. If respect to the dead can only be shewn by black feathers and black coaches, I am willing to pass to my resting-place unrespected. As, however, my object is not to save money for my estate, and as, without these directions, an additional sum of forty pounds would probably be expended in heartless show, I direct that this latter-named amount of forty pounds be distributed in charity as follows, viz.,—ten pounds to the minister of St. George's chapel, near Park Street; ten pounds to the minister of St. Augustine's church; ten pounds to the minister of the parish where I was born (St. Michael's); and ten pounds to the minister of St. Paul's church (all in Bristol). To be distributed by them in small sums, according to their discretion, to the deserving poor in their respective parishes."

There were, notwithstanding, many outward manifestations which proved how much he was esteemed by the inhabitants of his native city. The windows of the houses in the street where he had long resided were closed. A few private carriages followed the simple procession. The leading medical men of the city, the ladies of the Anti-slavery Committee, and many other personal friends, met the remains at the burial-ground. Near the grave were gathered the pupils of the Blind Asylum. And a touching

thing it was to behold them thus shewing their respect for the memory of him who had done so much for them. Amidst the solemn stillness of the scene, an address was given by the Rev. William James; and then the Rev. Geo. Armstrong committed the tenement of clay to the dust, rejoicing in the conviction, which was shared by the sorrowing hearts around the tomb, that the spirit had returned to God who gave it.

The pulpit of Lewin's-Mead chapel was hung with black by the congregation; and, on the day following the interment, an impressive and consolatory discourse was delivered by the Rev. Geo. Armstrong, from the text, "He being dead, yet speaketh."

ADDRESS OF THE REV. JOHN KENRICK, VISITOR, AT THE CLOSE
OF THE THEOLOGICAL EXAMINATION IN MANCHESTER NEW
COLLEGE, LONDON, JUNE 27, 1855.

IN addressing the friends of the College on the present occasion, I must express my regret that I was unable to discharge my duty as Visitor last year, at its first anniversary since its establishment—I hope its permanent establishment—in this place. My regret was lessened when I found how kindly and effectually my place was supplied by one of my oldest and most valued friends, with whom I first entered on the paths of academical life; and who is so well qualified to shew the aspirant to the Christian ministry how he may render the truths of the gospel at once intelligible to the simple and interesting to minds of the highest culture.

It is impossible to meet to-day the supporters of a College which from the first has adopted for its principle the separation of academical education from religious tests, without adverting to the triumph which this principle has obtained in the recent legislation for the University of Oxford. It is indeed not only as Nonconformists, aggrieved and injured by these tests, that we rejoice in what the Legislature has done. Attached to the constitutional liberties of our country, we see with pleasure a recognition in the title of the Act in question, that "the good government and extension" of the Universities of Great Britain is a part of the duties and prerogatives of her Imperial Parliament. No one, indeed, acquainted with the history and principles of the Constitution could doubt the power. But these bodies had assumed a proud and defiant attitude towards the Legislature, as if it were little short of sacrilege to inquire into their abuses, to overrule their statutes and by-laws, and provide for the better administration of their affairs and the more judicious application of their revenues. The simple recognition of this principle, followed even by a partial and imperfect exemplification, establishes a precedent which must hereafter be fruit-

ful in more important results than have hitherto flowed from it. Nor is this the only ground on which as citizens we rejoice in the recent legislation. We hope for an improved tone of public morality from the abolition of statutes which exacted from young and ingenuous minds declarations and oaths such as even heathen morality repudiated—oaths which the tongue swore, but in which the mind took no part. We see the prospect of an academical training for those who are to fill public stations, far better adapted than the old routine to the demands of an age which seeks improvement and perfection in every department of active life. Whatever makes the sources of the highest knowledge accessible, without violation of conscience, without wanton obstruction and delay, without unnecessary expense, is a national benefit. It lessens the danger of monopoly, and gives those who feel the impulse to excel the means of bringing their estimate of themselves to the test, and qualifying themselves for the duties to which they think they have a vocation.

Like many of the great changes which the last thirty years have witnessed, the abolition of subscription to articles of faith as the preliminary to academical education and partially to academical honours, has come upon us in some degree by surprise. When a question has been fully discussed, and numbers have triumphed over argument, and no practical result has apparently been attained, there often follows a period during which the former agitation is forgotten, public interest is diverted to more recent topics, and the few who turn their thoughts on the probability of a change, think the time of its arrival interminably, or at least indefinitely, distant. By a concurrence of circumstances, the same question is revived, and we are astonished to find how the public feeling has altered in the interval. Facts which were stubbornly denied before, are admitted as the basis of the discussion; objections, triumphantly urged as fatal, are set aside at once as sophisms; principles are recognized as self-evident, which were once contested as false and dangerous. When we witness such changes in feeling and opinion, we are apt to exclaim, "What a wonderful revolution has time brought about!" But what is *time*? Is he some magician who has but to wave his wand over the scene and call a new creation into existence? *Time* is only a convenient name for the operation of the fixed laws of the moral world; for the growth of the seed which the advocates of truth have scattered; for the working of the leaven which they have mingled with the meal; for the effects of the persevering efforts made by those whom temporary disappointment has not disheartened nor silenced. It would be a fatal error to suppose that if we neglect our work, time will be active while we are sleeping, and will do our work for us. One effect, indeed, its mere efflux produces; it carries away the habits and prejudices in which the passing generation has grown old,

and brings another on the scene, in whose minds truth has no such obstacles to conquer. We lament when the law of human mortality deprives us of those whom age had made wise in counsel and venerable for their virtue; we feel a more bitter regret when this law seems to contravene its own purpose by blighting the promise of an honourable and useful career. But viewed in connection with the progress of truth and amelioration, its wisdom and benevolence are manifest. Passion, personal interest, inveterate prepossession, pass away with the individuals whose minds have been closed by them to the admission of the truth; the truth itself survives, and sons wonder and are ashamed that their fathers should ever have been her foes. So far the course of Divine Providence may be said to work independently of the efforts of the advocates of truth; but this effect is rather negative than positive. It removes an obstacle from the path, but the impulse which gives motion and progress must be supplied by our own exertions. And among all the great changes of our time, none shews more clearly than University Reform the power of facts and arguments, clearly presented to the public mind, though without apparent or immediate effect. It has been brought about by no national distress, by no political excitement, or any of those causes by which deep-rooted abuses have been sometimes torn up as by a whirlwind, and swept away as by a torrent. Not to go back to the earlier efforts of Dr. John Jebb and his associates, what obloquy, what personal contumely, did not our excellent and lamented friend, Mr. Wood, bring upon himself when he led the way at a later period in the attempt to open the Universities to Dissenters! And what a contrast to these unworthy proceedings has been exhibited in the tone of the discussions on the measure which our distinguished President has successfully introduced and seen carried through Parliament! We feel the greater satisfaction in the triumph which he has gained, and the greater confidence that it must be the preliminary to further steps of liberal progress, because neither passion nor clamour have had any share in gaining it. It is a lesson at once of encouragement and instruction; of encouragement, as it exemplifies the irresistible power of truth; of instruction, as it shews that no violence, no exaggeration, is necessary to the success of a cause which has evidence and reason for its basis.

I have said that as citizens we rejoice in the legislation which opens the Universities to Dissenters; but I see nothing in it which should induce us to suppose that, by availing ourselves of the permission to enter them, we shall be released from the necessity of maintaining our own Institution. It is designed now for the education of our ministers only, and great must be the further changes which take place before *this* can be carried on with advantage where the spirit of the Establishment is so predominant—changes which no legislation can effect. Has

Oxford shewn any disposition to *welcome* within her walls the Nonconformist whom she is forbidden to exclude? Is she not rather disposed to treat them with that supercilious coldness, by which the proud and wealthy give the poor and humble to understand that they are intruders upon a circle in which they have no business? There are, I doubt not, among the members of the University many who have supported its reform in a spirit of Christian liberality; but I think I incur no charge of a want of candour in saying that such is not the spirit of the ruling majority. What it gives, it gives grudgingly and of necessity, and it would gladly take back in detail what it has been compelled to yield. But did a spirit of the greatest cordiality towards us prevail there, I cannot think that the national Universities, while they retain their connection with the Established Church, can ever be suitable schools for the education of our future ministers. All the influences of the place would tend to make them feel painfully the sacrifices which Dissent entails; their position must be one of inferiority, and they would for the time be cut off from all sympathy with the body in which their future ministry is to be carried on. They could enjoy no advantages of theological instruction which they could not obtain elsewhere, and the access to libraries would be of little value when weighed against the depressing and discouraging influences under which they would live.

But it is time that I address myself to the immediate business of this day, the close of the examination. Though I have not been able to be among you during the course of the session, I have received satisfactory reports both of your general conduct and of the results of the intermediate examinations. The testimony of the Professors whom you have attended in Science and Literature at University College has also been favourable, and I trust will be confirmed by the examination of undergraduates which is to take place to-morrow.

Of late years a very agreeable part of the Visitor's former duty at the close of an examination, the annunciation of prizes, has fallen into desuetude. I have this year the pleasure to read the award which has been made of two prizes, of £5. 5s. each; one for the greatest proficiency in Hebrew, offered to students in Manchester New College in their *theological* years, by Joseph Brooks Yates, Esq.; the other, of the same amount, by the same liberal friend of the College, for the greatest proficiency in Latin studies and Latin composition, offered to undergraduates of Manchester New College and University Hall. The Hebrew prize has been divided between Mr. R. Drummond in his *first*, and Mr. Edwin Smith in his *second* theological year. In regard to the Latin prize, the memorandum of the Principal observes,—“Ten competitors went in for this prize, seven lay students from University Hall, and three Manchester New College students, Mr. Blazeby, Mr. Upton and Mr. Dare. The examinations

were conducted in writing on three successive evenings, by Mr. A. Scott, on the part of the Manchester New College students, and by Mr. Gibbs, the Classical Tutor of University Hall, on behalf of the lay students of that Institution. After examination of the papers, Mr. Upton, of Manchester New College, and Mr. Talfourd Ely, of University Hall, were unanimously declared to be equal, and the prize was in consequence divided between them."

It has been customary for the Visitor of the College to address some words of exhortation and advice, more especially to those whose academical course is finished, and who are about to enter on the exercise of their ministry. I have in former years expressed my regret that my want of experience in the pastoral office prevents me from fulfilling this duty satisfactorily; and I must repeat the hope that the Committee of Manchester College will make some arrangement by which in future you may have the benefit of being addressed by ministers whose character and standing in their profession may give weight to those counsels which their experience will suggest. Perhaps I may render you most service if I address you in the character of a *hearer* rather than a *teacher*; that from the hearer's wants and feelings, you may judge what the strain of your teaching ought to be.

What brings the hearer to the house of God? I do not speak of those who merely comply with an established custom in order to avoid reproach; nor of those who listen to the preacher as they would to the actor, the lecturer or the parliamentary orator. The less the preacher thinks of such hearers, the more likely he is to speak in the true spirit of his office. But what induces a serious-minded man to devote a portion of the Lord's-day to public worship, and what benefit does he seek from religious instruction? I apprehend he does *not* come in general to hear demonstrations of the truths of natural or revealed religion. Already he believes in God—he believes also in Christ; else why does he appear where the worship of God is celebrated, and the doctrine of Christ is preached? Nor does he usually come to hear the question discussed, what particular form of Christian doctrine is the most scriptural; his choice of the place in which he worships and the teacher to whom he listens, shews that on this point also his mind is made up. There may be circumstances, indeed, when the defence of the first principles of religion, or of our own distinguishing belief, becomes an imperative and an urgent duty. The husbandman sometimes sees himself compelled to drop the pruning-hook and withdraw his hand from the plough, and take up shield and spear in order to keep possession of the soil he tills. But these are unusual circumstances interrupting the ordinary course of religious instruction, and rather to be deprecated than sought for. The serious and thoughtful worshiper rejoices in the day on which the cares of the world are suspended, and religious instruction takes the place of secular concerns,

because he finds that the world is the antagonist both of his faith and of his virtue. The first element of the religious life is the hearty belief and lively consciousness of the presence of an unseen God. And there is in the heart of every man a voice which declares not only the being of a God, but the duty of filial love, obedience and resignation, to the Father of our spirits. But the world in which the daily life of most men is spent, is a world of sense and material things. Human agency is everywhere so obvious and exclusive, that the idea of a spiritual power is never brought before the mind. The restless anxieties, the absorbing cares, the gay amusements, of the secular life, unite to banish the thoughts of things unseen and eternal. Christian faith finds an antagonist in the world and its week-day occupations. Those distant ages to which the origin of the gospel is thrown back, seem but shadows, cold and unreal. Reflection, contemplation, and therefore in some degree abstraction from the objects which surround us, are necessary in order to realize the events which are the foundation of our historical belief. The morality of the world, too, falls below the standard of the gospel. It is loose, conventional, superficial, selfish; it derives its rules and sanctions from prudence rather than from principle and conscience. Every one who is largely conversant with the world, and who does not give himself up unresistingly to its influence, will be conscious that it tends to lower his moral standard, to make him defer to general opinion, to concentrate his thoughts upon himself, to discountenance noble, generous and self-denying purposes. He comes, therefore, on the day when there is an intermission of the world's cares, as a *worshiper*, to revive and strengthen his religious feelings by the sympathy which a social act awakens. He hopes also that from the lips of the minister who leads his devotions, the thoughts which the day suggests may find a more fitting shape, a more impressive utterance, than he himself can give them. As a *hearer*, he seeks to have the truths of religion, its hopes, its consolations, its duties, restored to that place in the thoughts and affections from which they have been temporarily banished; to have God and eternity, Christ, his example, his precepts, his promises, brought with new power before his mind. He seeks to have his faith invigorated, his virtue strengthened, and his whole moral and spiritual nature renewed and refreshed. He knows that it is his duty to keep himself unspotted from the world; but he feels that its perpetual contact leaves a soil and a stain behind it, which he would wash off by a renewed baptism in the living waters of divine truth. Such are the motives with which men seek to *hear* the word, who desire also to be *doers* of it. It is to *their* wants, not to the tastes of the curious and the critical, that the faithful Christian minister should adapt his instructions.

There is nothing in this to discourage those who are preparing themselves for the ministry or about to enter on its exercise.

It is true that, however perfect your education within these walls may have been, you will have another education to go through, before you can effectually supply the wants of your hearers. Nothing but your own experience and observation can give you this. But let this be your encouragement: what the religious hearer seeks above everything else in his pastor is the earnestness that springs from strong conviction, the sympathy which arises from moral and religious sensibility. Hearers who have had larger and longer experience of life may perceive that your conceptions of its trials and its duties need to be corrected and matured: if you are wise, you will submit to learn from them. But they will never despise your youth, while they see that your heart is in your work, that the faith you inculcate on them is truly and thoroughly your own, and that you are yourselves striving after growth in those Christian graces which you exhort them to cultivate.

I may congratulate one of our young friends who is now about to leave the College and to enter on the ministry, that the difficulties and trials of its early years will be lessened to him, as he will begin his labours in the character of assistant to one who has filled the office of a pastor with honour and usefulness for half a century.* This is a relation now less commonly sustained between the young and the aged minister than formerly: if you know how to improve its advantages, you may escape many anxious thoughts and painful failures. You will have a friend and a guide during that crisis of your professional life, when sympathy and good advice are most important to your happiness. Receive his counsel with the deference which his character, his age and his experience claim. Do not seek suddenly to change what has endeared itself by long usage to your people, though you may think it susceptible of improvement, but wait till you thoroughly understand its working, and till you have gained an influence which will add weight to your opinion.

I believe that no exhortations of mine are needed to induce those whose term of preparation has not yet expired, to make a diligent use of what remains. You have shewn that you are not insensible to this duty. Every year calls away the men who have heretofore been the lights of our churches, or leaves them so feebly burning that we cannot hope much longer to rejoice in their light. To you we look to carry on the work which they have begun—to be the zealous champions of the truth, earnest and persevering and abundant in your labours, examples of Christian virtue, ready to sacrifice yourselves to the good of others and the advancement of the benevolent purposes of God. To Him and to the good Spirit of his grace I now earnestly and affectionately commend you.

* The Rev. Charles Berry, of Leicester.

SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE 210TH PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY,
AT LIVERPOOL, JUNE 21, 1855.

BY THE REV. RUSSELL LANT CARPENTER, B.A.

[We have much pleasure in printing the sermon recently delivered by Rev. R. L. Carpenter before the Provincial Assembly. In doing so, we are happy in thinking we fulfil a request preferred to its author by the local Committee, who so successfully arranged the proceedings of the very interesting meetings of last month.—ED. C. R.]

BRETHREN AND FATHERS, we are met to celebrate the 210th anniversary of the Provincial Assembly for Lancashire and Cheshire. It was established in the time of the civil wars, when our Calvinistic ancestors were in the ascendant, and vehemently maintained the divine right of their presbytery. The Presbyterian ministers of this county (Lancashire) in 1648 published a paper remonstrating against toleration, which was then denounced as the "Great Diana" of the Independents.* Their reign was brief. They welcomed back the monarchy, but were the chief sufferers from restored prelacy; and the measure of persecution they had meted, was measured to them again, heaped up and running over. They displayed in their sufferings the vitality of their religion and their profound reverence for conscience: and their Heavenly Father blessed them with a wider charity. The Church government, once deemed essential, had become impossible, and light shone through its ruins. Before our meeting-houses were built, they were foremost in the recognition of the right and duty of free inquiry, and the sufficiency of Scripture as the rule of faith.

After the passing of the Toleration Act in 1689, the Presbyterian ministers of these counties assembled at Knutsford, and for more than half a century met twice a-year, when, as we learn from their minutes, they claimed and exerted considerable influence over the body they represented;† but for the last hundred years, they have sought to wield no power incompatible with perfect religious liberty.

Here, then, are we, exceeding jealous of the slightest infringement on freedom, but tracing our descent from the most intolerant sect of the Commonwealth! Our forefathers would find us outstripping the independency of their rivals, who seem now inclined to association. The denominations have changed places; none can be less Presbyterian in government than ourselves.

Nor do we derive from mere Presbyterianism the Unitarian views which most of us profess and value. It is true that on the continent and in Ireland, as well as England, the churches which avow our doctrines had for the most part a Presbyterian origin; but two centuries ago they were rigidly Calvinistic. Freedom

* See Neal's History of the Puritans (1795), III. 287.

† See Christian Reformer for 1842, pp. 525, 526.

of thought was more apparent elsewhere. Biddle, against whose life they plotted, found sympathy among Baptists; Milton was an Independent; Penn, a Quaker; Newton and Locke, of a later date, were Churchmen; and *we* are indebted to various sects for many of our most distinguished writers and preachers, and for some of our congregations. If we cross the Atlantic, we find the first avowed Unitarian church to be the Episcopalian King's chapel at Boston; and whilst the churches that bear the Unitarian name are chiefly of the Congregational or Independent denomination,—and the maintainers of the Divine Unity mostly abound among Christians, Universalists and Liberal Friends,—I am not aware that they are there to be found under the designation Presbyterian.

Why, then, retain a title which is no longer descriptive? I value it for that reason. Names that attempt definition map out Christianity, and apportion a part to those who should possess the whole. Our present surnames were bestowed on our ancestors for some trifling peculiarity by which they were distinguished from other men; their descendants may long ago have lost the peculiarity, but retain the name of it as their birthright. And thus Presbyterian is our family name: it does not describe an accident of our conformation, but recalls our origin and kindred; it unites us by no bond of opinion or discipline, but as a household of Christian faith. Our denominational property has been lineally handed down to us: they are the same trusts, though the trustees pass away, and new edifices may stand among our fathers' tombs; and we inherit the same religious ground, though the old hedges which marked it out may be uprooted, and each summer may behold varied culture and fresh blossoms. We may not point to any principle or tenet which has been or is our exclusive possession; but rejoice in earnest and enlightened men, who have differed from each other, but have all contributed to enrich and quicken us. We are what we are through those who have gone before: he who sees the divine love in smiling sunshine, owns his obligation to the fierce ascetic Puritan who battled in the storm; the rational Unitarian is indebted to the logical Calvinist; and those who were themselves first disciplined in bondage, painfully learnt and manfully taught the principles of liberty which we strive freely to develop.

Now since we cannot, without disinheriting ourselves, deny our kindred to those who have preceded us, though their sentiments bear no resemblance to ours, we cannot consistently refuse the family name to those whose likeness to our ancestors is greater than our own. Presbyterianism may be inquisitorial and narrow, and "There is but one God" may be the war-cry of fanaticism; but we are nurtured in a free and comprehensive brotherly love, which was the disposition of our body when its presbyteries were perishing, and before the doctrine of the Divine Unity was fully

recognized. It is on this freedom and love that I am about to speak, taking as a text the words of the Apostle to the Gentiles :

Galatians v. 13: "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."

Paul preached Jesus, who redeemed his people from the curse of a law which had fettered them with its forms and crushed them with its burdens; and not for one hour would he give place, even to those of highest station in the church, when they swerved from that liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. But it was no anarchy into which they were called out of despotism. They had not left the slavery of Egypt to be the wild Ishmaelites of the desert, but to be citizens of heaven. The shackles which linked them in a common subjection, could only be dissolved by that divine spirit which revealed the celestial law of love and the indissoluble ties of sacred affinity. If they attempted to use their liberty as an occasion to the flesh, they would find that like the flesh it should yield corruption: those who bite and devour one another, are consumed of each other. Liberty is only immortal when it serves everlasting love.

It would fill volumes with matter of mournful interest to narrate the failure of efforts after spiritual freedom, through neglect of this great spiritual law. Every new sect justifies its existence by a declaration of independence; and the names Protestant, Dissenter, Nonconformist, Independent, indicate the aversion to tyranny which prompted their originators. But the noisiest declaimers for their own rights may, in their very vehemence, become most deaf to the claims of others; as the vilest slavery now gives its name to States which seemed most impatient of oppression.

"License they mean, when they cry Liberty;
For who loves that, must first be wise and good."

The designation Free Church is not uncommon; but so narrow or inconsistent are the prevalent notions of freedom, that the word calls up no precise meaning. Papacy and her daughter feel free only where they rule. National churches call themselves free when they forbid all *foreign* interference. The Free Church of Scotland claimed the name when it refused to submit to lay dictation, and already Seceders from that Church declare such freedom imperfect. Congregations assert their independence of presbyteries, yet may find themselves enslaved by a self-elected section of their own body, called a church; or the living society may be ruled by the trustees of dead founders; or the minister of their choice may keep them in constraint. Some who think the obligation to pay, one of the saddest encroachments on freedom, give the name Free Churches to those that have free sittings, or are free from the charges of a ministry. But, without Christian love, the nominal perfection of freedom may bring tyranny closest home. In religious as well as in poli-

tical republics, never may personal liberty be more restricted than when no man is a law unto himself, but every one is part of a law to every one; and if Law is only a synonym for Popular Will, those who acquire popularity may achieve despotism.

The true liberty of a church depends on something more vital than a form of government. Whatever confines the limits of Christian life, endangers Christian freedom. We affirm that no *man* is free to inquire, whilst he believes that departure from his creed would cause his perdition; and it is equally obvious that no *church* is free to inquire on any point on which it stakes *its existence*. If its life seems to depend on that which distinguishes it from others, it has a mortal dread of whatever may imperil that distinction; and it will only dare to examine freely when it feels that, whatever be the result, it will not perish from the true universal church. Persons associated for a particular purpose may reason among themselves *respecting* it, but not *against* it. If Peace Societies encouraged their members to advocate war,—Abolition Societies, slavery,—Temperance Societies, convivial excess,—Educational Societies, popular ignorance,—we should say at once that they were virtually defunct. So also it would be inconsistent for societies founded expressly to maintain any doctrines, to suffer in their adherents any opposition to those doctrines; and if Baptist churches or Unitarian churches should so far belittle themselves as to forget their vast functions as Christian communities, and to suppose that their being's sole end and aim was to promote those views in which they dissented from others, it is obvious that, on these points at least, it were suicidal to offer liberty of opinion. And as self-preservation is a primary instinct, such churches would only refrain from exacting subscription to creeds through a fear that they might irritate the doubts they desired to allay; would repress all free inquiry, except with the tacit understanding that it was to receive the authorized response; and would inform their members that open avowal of difference on this single element in the Christian life was the signal for dismissal.

We, brethren, have always declared that we are called unto liberty; and it is not the mere liberty of indifference. We shew our earnest reverence for sincerity by suffering exclusion from the popular churches rather than make confessions, false to us, which they require for admission; but our principles do not permit a reciprocal exclusiveness. Whilst we express ourselves frankly, we recommend the candour we display. We invite all who love Jesus, whatever be their creed, to the communion table, and also to that Christian fellowship of which it is an emblem. The clearer and wider are our conceptions of religion, the smaller seems the coincidence in a few theories. The points of doctrine which shone through the parted clouds like bright particular stars, lose their exclusive lustre when the mists dis-

perse and shew a whole heaven of constellations. We should despair of union, were unanimity the condition. Zealous Unitarians may find little accordance in the conceptions they form of God, and the doctrines they connect with his unity. Similar opinions respecting the Son of Man in heaven, may not prevent great difference respecting the sons of men on earth. Our ethics may spring from opposite sides of the circumference of duty: our devotions may be as various as the products of the tropical and the frigid zones: yet we may be drawn together by the ties, not only of a common humanity, but of a kindred faith; and whilst those who deem strife a duty may dwell in arms within the barriers which exclude us, we would live harmoniously, as in that celestial city the gates of which are never closed, because there is no night there.

Our own English Presbyterian denomination proves that a church may live on, whilst the distinction from which it took its name is entirely obliterated, its doctrines revolutionized, and its Puritan morality disowned; and it promises to live, whether its members deem that they had too hastily discarded some of the views of their ancestors, or, on the other hand, press onward for new light yet unrevealed. But here we may be met by a plea for bondage. "Take," it is said, "this very denomination of yours. Look at it 200 years ago, united in creed and discipline, powerful and vigorous. Compare it now with its rivals: they increase, it decreases. Surely your history affords little encouragement to freedom!" If we lived only for ourselves, and our life was to be measured by our numbers, our condition is indeed sufficiently doleful to invite the completest change; but the life of a church cannot be computed without reckoning the influence of the principles it has maintained and the spirit it has diffused; and, thus estimated, we have not lived in vain.

Mere freedom, indeed, can no more sustain a religious body than mere doctrine. Liberty may be a good battle-cry, and men will band together to fight for it; but warfare is absolute service, and when they cease to serve they will disband. A declaration of independence does not constitute a State; nor is a society built up by knocking down its walls. A free church may allow its free minister to say what he pleases and do what he pleases, and the free hearers will go elsewhere or nowhere as *they* please; and if they have no house of worship which, from its servile materialism, is unable to resolve at once into its elements, there will soon be no monument of these free spirits, whose chief inconsistency was when they expected to cohere. How shall we check this danger of insolvency? If any wish to sacrifice liberty to the maintenance of doctrines *peculiar* to ourselves, it seems a plain answer, that these cannot be found, since we believe that there are ten times as many Unitarians out of our body as in it; whilst if we were to ask our different congregations to draw up

a creed for general adoption, we should find the varieties so great, that the attempt at settlement would be the signal for anarchy.

Some who are weary with hearing us continually expounding how much we agree with other Christians and differ from each other,—how much we have to learn from our opponents and how little from our friends,—thinking they discern a woful wandering as the result of misused liberty, long for some strong man, some spiritual despot, who should discern what ought to be our characteristic life and thrust it into us,—crushing us into coherence, if not moulding us into organization; after which dictatorship, our republic might be fit for law once more, and become a well-regulated and prosperous state. Such a consummation I neither desire nor dread, so long as “No Master but Christ” is our watch-word. Our spiritual and intellectual growth has been greatly promoted by men of comprehensive and vigorous minds and loving hearts, who from time to time have risen up among us, and have spoken the word in season, and it were ungrateful and unjust to depreciate them; but they could not, and would not, lord it over us; nor do we await any coming man who shall. No! there may be feeble souls who crave to be ruled, and some, not quite so humble, who would submit, that others might be coerced to bow beneath the same sceptre; but they who want authority go to those accustomed to wield it. The timid may offer submission to an arrogant claimant to a despotism he calls apostolic; but will not suffer dictation from one who affirms that the apostles themselves claim no dominion over our faith, but are helpers of our joy. Our Presbyterian fortresses are dismantled; the ivy, the wild rose and honeysuckle, cluster around them; the stanchions are corroded, the gates broken. If you would bind your prisoners, bring them not here. Nature, with her unhindered growth, has proclaimed Liberty for ever in the ancient strongholds of oppression!

The apostle who pleads for liberty, preserves it with the injunction, “By love serve one another.” Unloving freedom and servile love are indeed diametrically opposed. Liberty promotes individuality—love, union; liberty struggles for rights—love seeketh not her own; liberty may obey the laws herself has made—but the laws of love disregard self. All our affections—love of country, of kindred, of friends, of home—have ties that cling to us and subdue us; whilst freedom seeks to escape. Yet it is true that freedom, unless it has love for others, changes its nature and becomes overbearing and tyrannous; and love pines into discontent, without some of the life and energy which freedom imparts. No one can have too much liberty who has an equal portion of love; and we want more of each, that we may *serve one another*. For Christ, who proclaimed *liberty*, was among us as one that *served*; and his disciples, to be like him, must serve too; and the greatest among us must be our ministers or

servants, and the church that serves most is in reality the chief; whilst outer darkness is the doom of the unprofitable. If a church cannot serve mankind, men care not how soon it dies; and if it is of no service to its members, *they* care little either. And if we feel that as individuals we are of use to the world, but as a church are of none, we shall soon be disposed to resolve ourselves into the units, as more effective than union.

It is the distinction of a freeman that he can do far more than the slave; but even the slave will do more than the savage. Next to absolute criminality, worthless vagabondism is the lowest condition of man. The untamed Indians die out, whilst Negroes multiply. Anarchy is not freedom. Those who have their fetters knocked off, must labour or fall. Liberty to think, is no licence to be thoughtless; liberty of conscience, is no permission to make free with her; liberty of action, sanctions no disorder or sloth. *Effective work* is the origin, justification, maintenance and prerogative of *freedom*.

Now is it not ominous for our congregations, that whilst they have trustees and committees for their *secular* work, they have sometimes but *one* servant for that *religious* work which alone justifies their existence? In their former vigour, they had not only a minister, but elders, deacons and church-members, all pledged to Christian offices; and our healthful societies comprise those who engage in similar duties under various names; but where these do not exist, freedom must perish. It departs from a listless people who have forsaken service, and from the minister whose service is turned to drudgery.

What freedom, one might dream, could be more perfect than to be the incumbent (as it were) of a chapel richly endowed—his own prolonged preaching the exposition of the trust—with none to cross his path! Ah, but what if there be none to help him in his path? The monarch of all he surveys, if he survey nothing but a desert, sand and dry bones, finds his sovereignty the dreariest imprisonment.

He is most truly free who lives among and works with the free: since none can abandon their proper liberty without impeding him on whom they throw it. A preacher promotes the life of his congregation and his own, by the freest utterance of his deliberate religious convictions; but if he is the *only one* to speak, he is deemed *their spokesman*, and, as their sole representative, feels his utterance fettered, if not perverted. So if the administration of the Christian working of the society is confided to him alone, like national ministers, he becomes conservative, and will not venture on anything in advance of his people. Paul tells the Corinthians that it was designed for the perfection of the body that no member should have every gift. If any one is expected to exert those which pertain to others, he will not freely use even his own. He whose special aptitude is for thoughtful con-

temptation and elevating instruction, finds it paralyzed by a variety of tasks for which he feels incompetent. The bread of life he is prepared to offer would be welcomed by those engaged in active duty; but he fears that the church that will not work has a poor appetite, which must be tempted by dainties and stimulants, and to provide these, he wastes in desponding toil: whilst he who has rare powers for doing good and seeking and saving the lost, droops under the irksome necessity of constant pulpit composition. And our noblest and truest men, of the highest ideal and tenderest conscience, may retire, or be dismissed, from what they feel a bondage.

Now when our liberty-loving people serve each other in love, not only will our ministers throw new life and energy, quickening to the whole body, into that office in which they excel, but they will in turn be inspired by their fellow-workers. When each member of a congregation feels that he owes a duty to it—when it has its teachers of the young, visitors of the sick and afflicted, and friends of the poor, its meetings for the quickening of sympathy, the mutual offering of prayer, and the free expression of thoughts relating to the Christian life—the minister is liberated from his isolation and his bonds, and rejoices in those labours more abundant which only the *free* can prompt and sustain. He converses freely, for he will be answered freely. He preaches freely, for he will have abundant opportunities of removing misconception—he and his hearers, in the best sense, understand each other. He prays freely, for other voices will offer the petitions which do not come spontaneously from him. He acts freely, for he has not to strain at impossibilities; and, where there is the effectual working in the measure of every part, the body increases. Those who desire to be edified in love are attracted to a society where they may be allowed to serve under the perfect law of liberty, and will not easily be severed from chosen duties and affectionate co-operators.

Free workmen are not the slaves of routine and prescription; they are distinguished by their aptitude at invention and promptness in emergency; and nothing is a greater proof that a church has been called unto liberty, than the readiness with which it meets the want of the time, finds out the right work, and does it. Christian congregations should have met and stemmed the appalling wickedness which surrounds and threatens them; but they have not zealously and ably entered on the duty, and those who were entering in, they hindered. The great moral impulses, unable to move the church, have moved outside it; and a timid and shackled faith has been at variance with the ardent and enterprising men who believed that the gospel was still a living power to reform the world.

We can scarcely plead that the efforts of our societies to over-

come evil with good, are what might have been expected from the stress we lay on practical religion, and the undoubted energy, originality and skill which our members display in works that engage their interest.

We do not, indeed, forget that one of the Unitarian body originated Domestic Missions, and that some of our congregations have been among the first to adopt them; and those for whose opinion we have the highest respect have commended them as the best exemplifications of our faith. But if these are churches fitted for the time, do they not suggest that our ordinary congregations are deficient,—that the active religious life of 1645 had died out, and the body had stiffened and wasted; whilst the new organizations thrive through the energy of their members, free to seek and earnest to perform the duty of to-day? If our schools and our missions colonize out of us, instead of being incorporated with us, *they* may flourish and *we* decline. When there is a more expanded life within ourselves, our own churches shall contain true ministries at large. Are there to be no poor among our fellow-worshippers? or are the poor to be the only ones to whom the gospel is brought *home*? Is the apparent comfort and respectability of our hearers, a proof that they lack nothing of being the perfect disciples of Christ who pleased not himself? May there not be among them the perplexed and weary, who crave the word in season,—the mourners, the desponding, the sinful? Are there none who long in vain for religious sympathy and help? Are our young people adequately trained in the principles of Christianity, and qualified for those missionary duties to which their benevolence prompts them? No mere kindness or ordinary talent will fit them to grapple with extreme ignorance and complicated vice. Our churches of wood and stone are rarely open through the week for divine service; but the true divine service of our living churches should never cease; they should be the centres of spontaneous holy influence. Those who freely give, must freely receive; and if their own household of faith is chilling and formal, how shall those who go forth from it be inspired for their work? We talk of what we must do for the perishing and dangerous classes, and forget that if we disregard the first duty,—to serve one another in love,—we are ourselves in danger of perishing. Charity must begin at home; and if the church which is her natural home refuses to receive her, *it* will be desolate, *she* a wanderer.

No, it cannot be *freedom* that is disorganizing us, when the free ministries at large are so healthful. Our danger is in our *narrowness*. We may think much of our freedom of thought, and talk much of our freedom of speech, and yet be cramped and pine in restraint. We want more freedom of action, freedom of heart, freedom of soul. There must be free communion at other places than at the Lord's table,—free communion with

each other, and free communion with God; and in all these communion services, freedom must be cherished by love. True nobleness and gentleness are allied, and no rude indifference to the rights and feelings of others shall clash upon the harmony of that church which is vocal with the spirit of Jesus.

If I am asked what is the special mission (as it is called) of our body, I should not profess to state it. Every year makes it more apparent that what were deemed our peculiarities are tending, without our help, towards general recognition. Various societies affirm *that* zeal for morality which was once our endeared reproach. The sons of the High-church champions of ignorance are eager to teach the people. The sects which dreaded carnal learning send welcome rivals to our students at the university. The book of God's works finds everywhere reverent readers. Free thought insists on utterance within those churches by whose creeds—so we are careful to remind them—it is rigidly excluded. Wise efforts to check vice are quietly correcting baseless speculations respecting sin; and those who go forth from sectarian barriers to unite in self-sacrificing love towards their brethren whom they see, are preparing, in the spirit of him who loved us, to recognize the unpurchased mercy of the heavenly Father. Were our efforts so feeble and selfish that we craved a *monopoly* to sustain them, we should crave in vain; or were we the mere heralds of a principle, when it was received our work would be done—our success would result in our absorption. But, as a Christian body desiring to work in any or every direction to which love and truth may prompt, never had we a clearer call for free, enlightened and faithful service. Our principles may cease to be *distinctive*, but only because others find them to be *fundamental*; and the more we are surrounded by those of kindred spirit, the happier and stronger will be our own spiritual and immortal life.

We meet to-day, brethren, in that fraternal feeling which we profess toward the world. Our churches have asserted their individual liberty, but own their mutual dependence. Some may seem of their worldly substance to be always giving, never receiving: it is more blessed to give than to receive. But none are so rich in good works as not to need stimulus and co-operation. Our poorest and humblest societies have for a time cherished our ablest instructors, or have awakened us by their own light shining before us in faith unquenchable.

Our ministers of highest culture feel imperfect in isolation; it is by blending of differences that we supply our deficiencies. How desolate—even as the prophet of old—would any of us feel if he only were left! How many neighbourly, brotherly offices would he recall with tender regret! Surely it is no waste of time once a-year to meet to shake each other by the hand—to hear a kindly, cordial greeting—to confirm the assurance that, in the

maintenance of principle and the discharge of duty, we are ready to give that encouragement and help which, like the cup of water to the fainting wayfarer, shall by no means lose its reward. And we are here, not only to *promise* mutual service, but to serve now by free communion,—if need be, by free discussion. All who have their hearts set on important labours, desire to confer with their fellow-workers. The philosophers who met last year in this commercial metropolis, found it not enough to record their observations on the transactions of societies; they must speak of them to living men. Now, saith Bishop Butler (Sermon xv.), “He who should find out one rule to assist us in the work of keeping the heart, would deserve infinitely better of mankind than all the improvers of other knowledge put together.” And if the whole world is not to be weighed against the soul, we must not doubt that those whose care it is to study what relates to the eternal life, have felt and known much, and might say somewhat, of those great truths to which the laws of the material universe are but subsidiary.

When these assemblies have so precious a bond of union, we shall have no fear of severing it by departure from safe custom, by manly frankness, or even by transient warmth of argument. This age of intense activity is fraught with no less significance than the era of the Commonwealth; nor should our meetings be pervaded by an interest less vital. Our forefathers met to devise governments and creeds; their benefit was dubious—their day was brief. It is not for these, which we have discarded, nor even for our meeting-houses and endowments, for which we are most their debtors. A church’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which it possesseth; they may stimulate covetousness and litigation, or lull to sloth. We prize as our heritage the buildings which they erected as God’s workmen,—the principles which were their foundation, the virtues which were the structure, the piety which enroofed them, the casements open for more and more light to stream from God’s word. We have our work to do: it must be done with the same hearty, living endeavour. No constitutions or creeds, or books and tracts, can mechanically perform it. It must be done by living men—by us, brethren in the ministry; by you, our welcome fellow-labourers in the gospel; by all who feel that the glorious liberty of the sons of God is to serve Him, like that beloved one in whom He was well pleased. Let not our descendants say that, at a period when the world was putting forth its strength, a church which was founded by unflinching heroes, established by self-denying confessors to truth, instructed by the wisest teachers, blessed by ardent philanthropists,—had lost heart—had no more courage to fight the good fight of faith—found no eternal life to lay hold on—and in dreamy restlessness sighed away its doubting and unhappy existence.

No, I trust in God that they shall not speak thus: the history of our denomination shall not record our degeneracy. It may say, that it found us humbled by a consciousness of our neglect; but shall add, that we were eager to repair it, learning in past failures the way to true success.

“ We argue not
Against Heaven’s hand or will; nor bate one jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear on, and steer
Right onward !”

Our Heavenly Father will sustain us as long as we are faithful to our duty—to be the steadfast disciples of Christ, that we may know the truth, and that the truth may make us free; to stand fast in this glorious liberty, but not stand idle; to serve in love each other—yea, our brethren of mankind. No! while our light is shining, however humbly, He will not put it out: it shall not be quenched by more effectual fires. Our radiance shall be as that of the morning star, that is gladsome whilst it heralds the day-spring from on high; and as the day dawns, it pales in brilliance, and its pure beams are lost to sight amidst the glories of the risen luminary; but whilst men mark it not, it still revolves round the sun whose splendours it harbingered and in whose light unspeakable it is clothed, and shines for ever in the firmament of heaven.

Now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,—to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever! Amen.

SYDNEY SMITH.*

OF the Englishmen, great by genius or patriotism, that lighted up the first half of the 19th century, only one or two now remain. One of the brightest stars in our literary and social firmament set ten years ago when Sydney Smith died.

The delay in the publication of these volumes has been accidental. The preparation of materials for the Memoir furnished constant occupation and solace to his widow during her surviving years. Her will expressed her earnest desire that some record of her husband’s virtues should be written. She was naturally anxious that the world should know something of the qualities of his mind and heart, more admirable than his talents and wit. Her thoughts turned to Moore, one of the most brilliant and successful of biographers. We can scarcely lament that he did not undertake the task, for his personal knowledge of Sydney Smith

* A Memoir of the Rev. Sydney Smith. By his Daughter, Lady Holland. With a Selection from his Letters, edited by Mrs. Austin. 2 vols. 8vo. Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans. 1855.

was not great. That Lord Jeffrey, one of his "playfellows," was prevented by age and infirmities from preparing the Memoir of his colleague and friend, is a more legitimate subject of regret; for no one, not a member of Sydney Smith's family, knew him better, and his practised pen would have analyzed the rare intellectual gifts of his friend with delicate precision, and illustrated his manly and admirable character with genial eloquence. How Mrs. Austin would have accomplished the task of the Memoir, had her health permitted her to undertake it, we can gather from her Preface and the selection she has made of the Letters. Judicious and cordial as her remarks are, and careful almost to fastidiousness as her treatment of the letters is, we see no reason for regretting that the composition of this biography has devolved almost of necessity on Lady Holland. For the information of such of our readers as have not seen these volumes and are not well read in the Peerage and Baronetage, we may inform them that the authoress is Sydney Smith's eldest daughter Saba,—that daughter whom the delighted father is recorded to have carried, when only a few hours old, from the nursery to introduce her in triumph to Jeffrey and the other distinguished men who founded the Edinburgh Review,—that daughter concerning whom her father, on the occasion of her marriage to Dr. Holland, foretold, with true prophetic ken, to the lady of Holland House, that she too would one day become "Lady Holland." We can well believe that in his daughter Saba the incomparable wit found a congenial associate,—that she delighted to accompany him in his brilliant social progresses, tempting and assisting him to enter now on this topic, now on that, on which she knew that his humour would be the raciest, or his fun the wildest, or his wit the purest. The well-spring of Sydney's wit was seldom or never dry. His social success was immensely helped by his never-failing animal spirits. Still the most exuberant wit must of necessity repeat itself. The story or the humorous sally which has delighted or convulsed with laughter one circle, is eagerly asked for in another. In a letter to his daughter Saba, written from the country, he says,

"We are going through our usual course of jokes and dinners; one advantage of the country is, that a joke once established is good for ever; it is like the stuff which is denominated *everlasting*, and used as pantaloons by careful parents for their children. In London, you expect a change of pleasantry; but M. and N. laugh more at my six-years'-old jokes than they did when the jokes were in their infancy."—II. 363.

But there was doubtless another reason for this besides the antiquity of the jokes. Good stories grow in their proportions, and, like artists' pictures, vary in their framing according to the effect produced. This is well known to all who have listened after intervals of time to the same story, as told by some professed wit. We make these remarks with no desire of depre-

ciating the richness and boundless variety of Sydney Smith's matchless talk, but simply to remind our readers that they must not always translate into the strictest prose all the good things, the delightful fancies and intellectual frolics, which his daughter has recorded of him. Like other men of great conversational powers, he sometimes was tempted into extravagance and paradox. If set forth and received as such, it will do no harm, while it greatly amuses; but now and then Lady Holland has, under the influence of filial piety, given a version to a favourite story, in which the extravagance and paradox of her father are attempted to be concealed. Take, for example, the often-quoted and amusing story of the roasted Quaker:

"Dining out on one occasion, he happened to meet Mr. —, whom he always met with pleasure, as he was a man of sense, simplicity, and learning; and with such a total absence, not only of humour in himself, but in his perception of it in others, as made him an amusing subject of speculation to my father.

"The conversation at dinner took a liberal turn. My father, in the full career of his spirits, happened to say, 'Though he was not generally considered an illiberal man, yet he must confess he had one little weakness, one secret wish,—he should like to roast a Quaker.'

"'Good heavens, Mr. Smith!' said Mr. —, full of horror, 'roast a Quaker?' 'Yes, Sir' (with the greatest gravity), 'roast a Quaker!' 'But do you consider, Mr. Smith, the torture?' 'Yes, Sir,' said my father, 'I have considered everything; it may be wrong, as you say: the Quaker would undoubtedly suffer acutely, but every one has his tastes, mine would be to roast a Quaker: one would satisfy me, only one; but it is one of those peculiarities I have striven against in vain, and I hope you will pardon my weakness.'

"Mr. —'s honest simplicity could stand this no longer, and he seemed hardly able to sit at table with him. The whole company were in roars of laughter at the scene; but neither this, nor the mirth and mischief sparkling in my father's eye, enlightened him in the least, for a joke was a thing of which he had no conception. At last my father, seeing that he was giving real pain, said, 'Come, come, Mr. —, since you think this so very illiberal, I must be wrong; and will give up my roasted Quaker rather than your esteem; let us drink wine together.' Peace was made, but I believe neither time nor explanation would have ever made him comprehend that it was a joke."—I. 146, 147.

It happens that we know something of the circumstances under which the odd talk about roasting a Quaker arose, and are able to reduce this mythical jest to its true proportions. "The conversation at dinner," says Lady Holland, "took a liberal turn." Now for the facts of the case. This well-remembered conversation began with some very illiberal reflections made, not jocularly, but apparently in serious earnestness, by Sydney against the Quakers. The gentleman of "sense, simplicity, and learning," was familiar with several most excellent men among them, and was engaged with them in works of public benevolence. He took up their cause; and Sydney, as his manner was, went on

with humorous exaggeration to say, "Well, I should delight to snuff the *nidor* of a roasted Quaker." All that follows about "Consider the pain, Mr. Smith," and the rest, which is introduced to make it appear that the amiable and learned advocate of the Quakers was impenetrable to a joke, is the embellishment which the professed story-teller allows himself for effect. The truth is, that to all who even slightly know the gentleman alluded to, the idea of his having no power of appreciating humour is simply absurd. These remarks only tend to this, which every judicious reader or hearer of good stories is prepared for, that historical accuracy is seldom their characteristic. But while we admit that, in the recital of Sydney Smith's jokes, we have marked one or two instances of the sacrifice of accuracy to the love of satire and the desire of raising a laugh, we feel bound to bear testimony to the amiable spirit of the biographer in general, and to honour the truth, the love of justice and the liberality, which were the constituents of Sydney Smith's character, and which formed for the most part the staple of his wonderful talk. It is not as "a sayer of good things" that we are going to dwell upon this remarkable man. As he himself said of Charles Austin (II. 421), he was "something much better." It is because Lady Holland's volume brings out into such strong light these better things, and because she, by her intimate knowledge of them, could bear such unimpeachable testimony respecting them, that we gratefully welcome her into the field of biographical literature.

Hitherto Sydney Smith has been chiefly known to the world as a fine writer of English, a powerful advocate of social progress, a still more powerful crusher of the fallacies by which mental sloth or political corruption seeks to impede progress, and as the prince of wits and a most successful man of society. Henceforth, by the instrumentality of this Memoir and the illustrative volume of Letters, he will be known and revered as a good man, whose life was a beautiful illustration of a pure and exalted morality. Seldom have we contemplated a stronger illustration than his life presents, of the intense power of common sense, of the love of truth and justice, of the strong desire of practical usefulness, and of the combination of rare intellectual gifts with the faithful performance of social and especially domestic duties. We greatly rejoice at this: it will dissipate a thousand unfounded prejudices, and it will give fresh currency and moral power to the writings of this good man. There is so much prudishness in English society in relation to clergymen, that infinite are the risks they run of being misunderstood and reviled during their lifetime, if they possess wit, and dare to brave prejudices, and laugh at follies, particularly religious prejudices and follies. This is still the case; but fifty years ago, when Sydney Smith emerged into fame, it was more so. There were then innumerable people

who did not doubt, because Sydney Smith was a wit and an Edinburgh reviewer, that he was a Free-thinker. When the critics were called upon to regard him as a clergyman and a religious instructor, by the publication of two volumes of his Sermons, there was, from the High-church and Tory organ, and from Evangelical Dissenting journals, an united outcry that it was idle to expect Christian truth or saving wisdom from the briars and thistles of a mere epicurean philosophy. All this will now be changed. Sydney Smith will henceforth be placed side by side with Dr. Arnold, Bishops Stanley, Bathurst and others, who have adorned the Christian profession by their unflinching advocacy of what they believed to be right and true, and by the illustration of their principles in their lives.

Sydney Smith was born at Woodford, in Essex, 1771. He had three brothers and one sister, all said to have been possessed of remarkable ability. His father, Mr. Robert Smith, appears to have had more ability than wisdom. Inquisitive, roving, unsettled, he married early, and parted at the church-door from his beautiful bride, to begin a series of journeys and voyages which occupied him many years. His fortune he dilapidated by buying one place after another (his granddaughter says as many as nineteen), spending money in alterations, and selling again at a loss. From such a father, the sons inherited, with a robust frame, some tendency to eccentricity; but all the finer qualities of their mind they derived from their mother. She was the youngest daughter of a French emigrant, named Olier. This infusion in his veins of French blood was sometimes spoken of by Sydney Smith as one of the causes of his mercurial temperament, so far removed from the Anglo-Saxon gloom. How often is the page of biography marked with the praise of the mothers of distinguished men! Sydney Smith owed to his mother much that was good and great in his character. The perverseness of a parent sometimes acts negatively and advantageously on the minds of the children; so it may have been that the imprudence and imperfect moral sense of his father, by serving as a warning, called into activity the son's practical wisdom and energetic fulfilment of his duties as the head of a family. Robert, the elder brother of Sydney, better known by the soubriquet of Bobus, was also distinguished both in youth and after life. In the former, at Eton, he was one of the four authors of the "Microcosm," in conjunction with Canning, Frere and John Smith. It was Sydney's less happy fate, after attending the private school of a clergyman, named Marsh, at Southampton, to be sent, with his youngest brother Courtenay, to Winchester school, where at that time the prevalent system was one of "abuse, neglect and vice." Barely provided with food of the worst kind, he struggled through years of suffering and misery, till he reached the highest honours of the establishment and became captain of the school. He was

wont to look back on his life at Winchester with intense disgust; the Latin verse-making of the place was not excepted from the feeling; he thought it "time wasted." After spending a few months (during the fiercest period of the French Revolution) in Normandy, in order to perfect his acquaintance with the French language, he entered New College, Oxford, where, as a Winchester captain, the road was open to first a scholarship and then a fellowship. Oxford suggested few pleasant associations to the mind of Sydney Smith. The fellows of his college were chiefly noted for their deep potations in port wine. His slender means and his native independence of mind, which indisposed him from receiving what he could not return in kind, made his life at New College somewhat solitary. As soon as possible, Sydney gained his fellowship, and from that time was left by his strange father to shift for himself as he could,—a selfish proceeding, the consequences of which were, however, in the end serviceable to him who was thus early thrown on his own resources, and beneficial to the world, by the labours of which poverty was the stimulus. With some natures, hard experience of this kind brings on premature worldliness and selfishness. It had not that effect with Sydney, who, out of the slender means from his fellowship, parted with a sum exceeding the fourth of his yearly income, to pay off a school debt which his brother Courtenay could not pay and dared not reveal to his father.

When the time for choosing a profession came, his wishes would have led him to the bar; and had he been permitted to follow the profession of the law, there can be little doubt that he would have reached its higher honours, and, by his eloquence, strong sense and sterling independence, would have won wealth, fame, and a high station in the country. His father wished to send him as supercargo to China; this scheme was happily abandoned. Then his father urged him to go into the Church, and, from a sense of duty rather than from inclination, he took orders, and obtained the curacy of Netherhaven, near Amesbury, on Salisbury Plain.

"Sydney Smith, a curate in the midst of Salisbury Plain! To those who knew him, and his cast of character, the mere statement of the fact will be enough to paint his feelings; but to those who knew him not, it would be difficult to express the famine of the mind that came over him when planted in that great waste of Nature. He has himself painted a curate as 'the poor working-man of God—a learned man in a hovel, good and patient—a comforter and a teacher—the first and purest pauper of the hamlet; yet showing that, in the midst of worldly misery, he has the heart of a gentleman, the spirit of a Christian, and the kindness of a pastor.'

"This picture can hardly be heightened, as descriptive of a curate in the abstract; but here was a curate formed, by his wit and powers of conversation, for the society of his fellow-creatures, doomed to the most unbroken solitude; and, pauper as he was, with scarcely a hamlet to

interest him, for the village consisted but of a few scattered cottages and farms, in the midst of Salisbury Plain. Once a week a butcher's cart came over from Salisbury; it was then only he could obtain any meat, and he often dined, he said, on a mess of potatoes, sprinkled with a little ketchup. Too poor to command books, his only resource was the Squire, during the few months he resided there; and his only relaxation, not being able to keep a horse, long walks over those interminable plains."—I. 10, 11.

It is one of the evils of a Church Establishment that, by providing men with a living and a social status, it tempts some into its ministry who are not conscious of "holy orders." It is not often that an unwilling candidate for orders makes so conscientious and useful a clergyman as was Smith.

Technically speaking, Sydney Smith was no theologian. Even had his taste lain in this direction, the multiplicity of his pursuits would have prevented his acquiring distinction in a science which, like the law, jealously withholds its highest honours from those who refuse to it their exclusive attention. But his strong common sense and love of fair dealing made him throughout life a hater and a rebuker of religious persecution, and an advocate and example of toleration and forbearance. Lady Holland says, with great justice,

"It will be seen in the narrative, and, in justice to my father, it ought not to be forgotten, that he entered the Church out of consideration for, and in obedience to, the wishes of his father; and, like his friend, Dr. Stanley, Bishop of Norwich, with a strong natural bias towards another profession; so that, in his passage through life, he had often to exercise control over himself, and to make a struggle to do that which is comparatively easy to those who have embraced their profession from taste and inclination alone.

"But having entered the Church from a sense of duty, I think the narrative will show that he made duty his guide through life;—that he honoured his profession, and was honoured in it by those who had the best opportunities of observing him;—that, ever ready to perform its humblest duties, he gathered (as he says) from the study of the Bible, that the highest duty of a clergyman was to calm religious hatreds, and spread religious peace and toleration;—that in this labour of love he exerted himself from the time of his entering the Church to the hour of his death;—and that he dreaded, as the greatest of all evils, that the 'golden chain,' which he describes as 'reaching from earth to heaven,' should be injured either by fanaticism or scepticism. Thus, lending himself to no extremes and no party in the Church, he endeavoured through life to guard religion simple and pure, as we received it from the hand of God, and as it is taught in that Church to which he belonged."—Pref. pp. ix, x.

To Unitarian Dissenters it may seem a little strange that premises like these did not lead a clear thinker like Sydney Smith to the conclusion that he ought to separate himself from a Church one of whose symbols is the Athanasian Creed. But he probably put down suggestions of conscience of this kind by the oft-

told fallacy that the articles and symbols of the Church are not so much declarations of individual faith as articles of peace, doors by which men of many different minds may enter into and find repose in the Church. Or, feeling the difficulty and inconsistency, he may have thought he could do more for liberal opinions by remaining in the Church and exercising all his influence as one of its ministers in upholding religious toleration, than by an act of open protest and fearless nonconformity. But it is not for us to judge. He thus describes his own religious position; and that he supposed the description to be perfectly true, we have not the slightest doubt.

"The Church must be distinguished from religion itself; we might be Christians without any Established Church at all, as some countries of the world are at this day. A church establishment is only an instrument for teaching religion, but an instrument of admirable contrivance and of vast utility. *The Church of England is the wisest and most enlightened sect of Christians; I think so, or I would not belong to it another hour.* But is it possible for me to believe that every Christian out of the pale of that Church will be consigned after this life to the never-ending wrath of God? If I were to preach such doctrines, who would hear me? Can I paint God as the protector of one Christian creed, dead to all prayers, blind to all woes but ours?—God, whom the Indian Christian, whom the Armenian Christian, whom the Greek Christian, whom the Catholic, whom the Protestant, adore in a varied manner, in another climate, with a fresh priest and a changed creed. Are you and I to live again, and are these Christians as well as us not to live again? Foolish, arrogant man has said this, but God has never said this. He calls for the just in Christ. He tells us that through that name He will reward every good man, and accept every just action; that if you take up the cross of Christ he will reward you for every kind deed, repay you sevenfold for every example of charity, carefully note and everlastingly recompense the justice, the honour, the integrity, the benevolence of your present life. And yet, though God is the God of all Christians, each says to the other, He is not your God, but my God; not the God of the just in Christ, but the God of Calvin, the God of Luther, or the God of the Papal Crown."

"The true Christian, amid all the diversities of opinion, searches for the holy in desire, for the good in council, for the just in works; and he loves the good, under whatever temple, at whatever altar he may find them."—I. 54, 55.

We left Sydney Smith in the wilderness. Fortunately for him, Netherhaven had its resident squire, Mr. Beach, who had the good sense to appreciate the very remarkable man who adorned the curacy by his talents and worth. Social intercourse between the curate and the squire, first slight, grew into intimacy and ripened into friendship, and by the time the curate was ready for priest's orders, Mr. Beach proposed that he should accompany his eldest son as tutor to the University of Weimar, in Saxony. Such a mode of conducting the education of an English gentleman was then so uncommon, that we may perhaps attribute it to

the influence of the curate himself, who had not yet forgotten his rough experience at Winchester and his years of solitude at Oxford. To the close of his life he seems to have retained a strong aversion to the English Universities. Writing to Lady Morley in 1831, he says,

“—— has been to Cambridge to place his son; in other words, he has put him there to spend his money, to lose what good qualities he has, and to gain nothing useful in return. If men had made no more progress in the common arts of life than they have in education, we should at this moment be dividing our food with our fingers, and drinking out of the palms of our hands.”—II. 333.

To another lady he writes, three years after,—

“I feel for —— about her son at Oxford; knowing, as I do, that the only consequences of a University education are, the growth of vice and the waste of money.”—II. 426.

The Weimar scheme was not carried into effect, although Sydney started with his pupil for Germany. It was in the year 1797. The breaking out of the war rendered any part of the continent an undesirable abode for two Englishmen; so, as he was wont to express it, in stress of politics they put into Edinburgh, where he found for five years a safe and very pleasant haven.

On what slight incidents do great results depend! How much have the port-bibbing fellows of New College to answer for! Had they cultivated literature and science rather than the pleasures of the table, New College might have been what Oriel has since been, and the solitary student from Winchester might have formed associations of thought and feeling which would have bound him heart and soul to his alma mater, and then, instead of hastening to the university of the Northern metropolis, he and his pupil would have found a home at Oxford. Had such been the result, the Edinburgh Review might never have been established, Toryism might have had another fifty years' lease, and we might now be discussing the Catholic Claims or forming an United Committee for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts!

The concentration of talent in Edinburgh in 1797 was remarkable. Walter Scott, Dugald Stewart, Playfair, Francis Horner, Jeffrey, Allen, Brougham, Brown, Murray, Leyden, Lord Woodhouselee, are names none of which will be soon forgotten, and some of them will live as long as the English language endures and its literature is prized. The habits of the people of “Auld Reekie” were both simple and social, free from the “struggle for display” which follows in the train of wealth, and sooner or later destroys society. The young English clergyman was everywhere received with open arms, and the delight which his wonderful powers of conversation at once inspired is the best refu-

tation of his own witty exaggeration, that "it required a surgical operation to get a joke well into a Scotch understanding."

Before the century closed he married, his wife being the schoolfellow and intimate friend of his sister Maria. The only painful circumstance that grew out of this marriage was the opposition and alienation of his wife's brother, Mr. Charles Pybus, one of Pitt's Lords of the Admiralty, who, in his hatred of his new brother-in-law's bold politics, could not see his present worth and future greatness.

It was not till towards the close of Sydney Smith's five years' residence in Edinburgh that he proposed to his two friends, Jeffrey and Brougham, to set up a Review, for the furtherance of the just and liberal principles which they held in common, and for the sake of rescuing criticism from being the mere servile hack of booksellers. They whose privilege it is to have known nothing of the bad politics of Pitt, Percival, Sidmouth and Castlereagh, and the savage literature of the Anti-Jacobin, the early years of Blackwood and "John Bull," can scarcely realize the base and merciless spirit of Toryism during the first twenty years of the present century. Nor can they sufficiently realize the noble independence and the high moral courage of that remarkable band of young men who, preferring truth to expediency, and their honest convictions to their professional prospects, volunteered on what seemed the forlorn hope of liberalism. To lawyers and politicians like Jeffrey, Brougham and Horner, the enterprize was sufficiently dangerous; but to a young English clergyman, equally destitute of family Church patronage and aristocratic connections, it must have seemed almost hopeless. But he had a passionate "love of common justice and common sense," and, with the instinct and courage which mark true genius, he saw the road to success and fame where others would have seen only defeat.

The new Review, which started under the editorship of its projector, at once took its place in the literature and politics of Great Britain, and became a power before which literary quacks and political jobbers trembled. It need not be concealed that great mistakes were made by these high-spirited young men in their early literary career. In their desire to avoid any approach to literary puffing, they rushed into the opposite extreme of severe depreciation, and sometimes treated the unfortunate authors on whom they pronounced sentence as indefensible criminals. The poetical criticisms of Jeffrey were especially severe and equally unjust. Wordsworth, Byron and Montgomery, were treated with an insolent contempt, the remembrance of which must have afterwards been sufficient punishment to the rash critic. Sydney Smith was protected by his love of fair dealing and his invaluable common sense from similar blunders. If we make any exception, it is where he speaks of Methodism and

Methodists,—a subject on which he was blinded as much by clerical and social prejudices as by his genuine horror of fanaticism and hypocrisy. We shall not dwell on his contributions to the *Edinburgh Review*. They have in their collected form taken honourable rank amongst the English essayists, and, notwithstanding the large admixture of matter of temporary and passing interest, they are so vivified with truth and principle, so adorned with wit, and are expressed in such sterling English, that they will be read, remembered and quoted, until people are tired of truth and indifferent to eloquence and wit. But before we pass from the topic of the *Review*, we must allude to one article, now known to be his, of some interest to us as Unitarians.

Those who read the *Edinburgh Review* four-and-thirty years ago, will remember a short but admirable article in No. LXIX., published March, 1821, entitled “Dissenters’ Marriages,” designed to promote the success of the Unitarian Marriage Bill, then before Parliament. This article, though not published in Sydney Smith’s collected works, appears from the following letter to Jeffrey to be his, and the discussion of the topic in the *Review* to have been entirely suggested by him,—a circumstance greatly to his credit as a clergyman.

“TO FRANCIS JEFFREY, ESQ.

“*Foston*, 1820.

“My dear Jeffrey,—For the number next but one, I have engaged to write an article on Ireland, which shall contain all the information I can collect, detailed as well as I know how to detail it.

“The Unitarians think the doctrine of the Trinity to be a profanation of the Scriptures; you compel them to marry in your churches, or rather, I should say, we compel them to marry in our churches; and when the male and female Dissenter are kneeling before the altar, much is said to them by the priest, of this, to them, abhorred doctrine. They are about to petition Parliament that their marriages may be put upon the same footing as those of Catholics and Quakers. The principles of religious liberty which I have learnt (perhaps under you) make me their friend in the question; and if you approve, I will write an article upon it. Upon the receipt of your letter in the affirmative, I will write to the Dissenting king, William Smith, for information. Pray have the goodness to answer by return of post, or as soon after as you can, if it is but a word; as despatch in these matters, and in my inaccessible situation, is important.

SYDNEY SMITH.”

Jeffrey of course consented; the “Dissenting king” referred his correspondent for information to the *Monthly Repository*; and Vol. XIV. of that periodical was placed at the head of an article of robust sense and lively style, the interest of which is greatly enhanced to us from the knowledge that it came from the pen of Sydney Smith.

Before leaving Edinburgh, Sydney Smith used the opportunity afforded by the medical classes of the University, to study the human frame and learn the principles of the art of healing. In

after life, and especially in his seclusion in a Yorkshire village, and at some critical domestic experiences, he found his medical knowledge and skill of great use. Early in 1804, having finished the superintendence of the education of his Wiltshire pupils, he had no longer duties or income in Edinburgh, and quitted it for London. Here he obtained a preachiership at the Foundling Hospital. As a preacher, he immediately acquired popularity of the best kind, commanding the respectful attention of persons of knowledge and cultivation. An attempt which he made to procure a licence for a chapel then occupied by a Dissenting sect, was defeated by the clerical *red-tape-ism* and the adherence to ecclesiastical routine of the well-beneficed rector of the parish. The correspondence between Sydney and this timid dignitary is highly characteristic and amusing. He had to struggle through several years of poverty and anxiety. The popularity which he acquired at certain proprietary chapels at which he preached, led to the proposal by his kind friend Sir Thomas Barnard, that he should give a course of lectures on Moral Philosophy at the Royal Institution. The experiment was successful and lucrative. He who could interest such hearers as the late Sir Robert Peel, Francis Horner and Mrs. Marcet, as well as a host of fashionable people, united in himself powers not often combined. "Who," said Horner, in admiration of these lectures, "could make such a mixture of odd paradox, quaint fun, manly sense, liberal opinions and striking language?" The description of Sydney Smith's household system at this period of his life is interesting and instructive:

"He still remained poor. But it was poverty in its most pleasing form; not that struggle with wealth, not that false shame, the outward show, the constant seeming, which we so often witness in the world, and which is the real sting of poverty; but the poverty of a man of sense who respected himself.

"All was consistent about him: the comfort and happiness of home he considered the 'grammar of life;' and his house, though plain, often in every sense of the word, was all his life the perfection of comfort. Considering domestic comfort so important, he thought no trouble too great, no detail too small, to merit his attention; and though brought up in wealth and luxury, affection soon taught his wife to second him. He never affected to be what he was not; he never concealed the thought, labour, and struggle it often was to him to obtain the simple comforts of life for those he loved; as to its luxuries, he exercised the most rigid self-denial. His favourite motto, which through life he inculcated on his family, on such matters was, 'Avoid shame, but do not seek glory,—nothing so expensive as glory;' and this he applied to every detail of his establishment. Nothing could be plainer than his table, yet his society often attracted the wealthy to share his single dish."—I. 87, 88.

His supper parties, with their simple fare, offered better attractions than wealth or fashion could always command. Who

would not have quitted any mere fashionable circle to have partaken of the "wit, sense, anecdote and instruction, that flowed incessantly" at Sydney's board?

When the Whigs obtained in 1806 their short lease of power, the influence of Holland House extorted from Lord Chancellor Erskine one of the few livings of which he had the actual patronage. It bore the unpromising name of Foston-le-Clay, and was distant a long stage from the city of York. It had not had a resident clergyman for more than a century; the parsonage-house was a hovel, fit only for a swine-herd; the parishioners were small farmers and their servants. The Archbishop of York of that day was Dr. Markham; and it is recorded that on the occasion of Sydney Smith's first official dinner at Bishopthorpe, his brilliancy of conversation and dashing style of talk, so entirely new in those decorously dull gatherings of the clergy, struck his diocesan with no small surprise, not unmingled with a feeling of displeasure at the lead taken by one of the inferior clergy. The summer of 1807 he spent in a cottage at Sunning, near Reading; and there it was that he began his series of Letters from Peter Plymley to his Brother Abraham, on the subject of the Irish Catholics, which have been pronounced by a competent judge, "after Pascal's Letters, the most instructive piece of wisdom in the form of irony ever written." The effect produced by them was deep and lasting; for, like the works of Andrew Marvell, they were read by the foes as well as the friends of the principles they upheld. It was during his temporary residence in Berkshire that he made the acquaintance of Lord Stowell (then Sir William Scott), who said to him more than once, with more truth than sympathy, "Ah! Mr. Smith, had you belonged to us, you would have been a richer man." Until the passing of Percival's Residence Act, Sydney Smith was allowed to depute the duties of his parish to a curate. When that Act became law, the rector of Foston-le-Clay was startled by a summons from his Archbishop to reside—and residence involved building a parsonage-house—or resign. He found the means of transporting his family into the heart of Yorkshire (a feat both costly and not without its bodily risks in those days of bad roads and ill-appointed coaches, humorously called "diligences") by publishing two volumes of the sermons which had earned him a metropolitan popularity. It was in 1809 that he and his family emigrated northwards, and found a temporary home in the pleasant village of Heslington, about two miles distant from York. From the courteous and amiable Dr. Harcourt, who had in the mean time succeeded to the Archbishopric, Sydney Smith obtained a short indulgence, releasing him for a time from compliance with the Residence Act, in the hope that he might be able to effect an exchange of livings. But Foston, with its boorish population, and its three hundred acres of glebe land of the stiffest clay, and its hovel for the rector

to dwell in, offered no temptations to clergymen in possession of Chancery livings, and with them alone could he have effected an exchange. After much anxiety and the perhaps worse sufferings of deferred hope of an exchange, he set resolutely to work to build. Often as the passage has been quoted, the tale of how he sped in his building and furnishing must be told in his own inimitable words :

"All my efforts for an exchange having failed, I asked and obtained from my friend the Archbishop another year to build in. And I then set my shoulder to the wheel in good earnest; sent for an architect; he produced plans which would have ruined me. I made him my bow: 'You build for glory, Sir; I, for use.' I returned him his plans, with five-and-twenty pounds, and sat down in my thinking-chair, and in a few hours Mrs. Sydney and I concocted a plan which has produced what I call the model of parsonage-houses.

"I then took to horse to provide bricks and timber; was advised to make my own bricks, of my own clay; of course, when the kiln was opened, all bad; mounted my horse again, and in twenty-four hours had bought thousands of bricks and tons of timber. Was advised by neighbouring gentlemen to employ oxen: bought four,—Tug and Lug, Hawl and Crawl; but Tug and Lug took to fainting, and required buckets of sal-volatile, and Hawl and Crawl to lie down in the mud. So I did as I ought to have done at first,—took the advice of the farmer instead of the gentleman; sold my oxen, bought a team of horses, and at last, in spite of a frost which delayed me six weeks, in spite of walls running down with wet, in spite of the advice and remonstrances of friends who predicted our death, in spite of an infant of six months old, who had never been out of the house, I landed my family in my new house nine months after laying the first stone, on the 20th of March; and performed my promise to the letter to the Archbishop, by issuing forth at midnight with a lantern to meet the last cart, with the cook and the cat, which had stuck in the mud, and fairly established them before twelve o'clock at night in the new parsonage-house;—a feat, taking ignorance, inexperience, and poverty into consideration, requiring, I assure you, no small degree of energy.

"It made me a very poor man for many years, but I never repented it. I turned schoolmaster, to educate my son, as I could not afford to send him to school. Mrs. Sydney turned schoolmistress, to educate my girls, as I could not afford a governess. I turned farmer, as I could not let my land. A man-servant was too expensive; so I caught up a little garden-girl, made like a milestone, christened her Bunch, put a napkin in her hand, and made her my butler. The girls taught her to read, Mrs. Sydney to wait, and I undertook her morals; Bunch became the best butler in the county.

"I had little furniture, so I bought a cart-load of deals; took a carpenter (who came to me for parish relief, called Jack Robinson) with a face like a full-moon, into my service; established him in a barn, and said, 'Jack, furnish my house.' You see the result!

"At last it was suggested that a carriage was much wanted in the establishment; after diligent search, I discovered in the back settlements of a York coach-maker an ancient green chariot, supposed to have been

the earliest invention of the kind. I brought it home in triumph to my admiring family. Being somewhat dilapidated, the village tailor lined it, the village blacksmith repaired it; nay, (but for Mrs. Sydney's earnest entreaties,) we believe the village painter would have exercised his genius upon the exterior; it escaped this danger however, and the result was wonderful. Each year added to its charms: it grew younger and younger; a new wheel, a new spring; I christened it the *Immortal*; it was known all over the neighbourhood; the village boys cheered it, and the village dogs barked at it; but 'Faber meæ fortunæ' was my motto, and we had no false shame.

"Added to all these domestic cares, I was village parson, village doctor, village comforter, village magistrate, and Edinburgh Reviewer; so you see I had not much time left on my hands to regret London.

"My house was considered the ugliest in the county, but all admitted it was one of the most comfortable; and we did not die, as our friends had predicted, of the damp walls of the parsonage."—I. 157—160.

As a parish priest, Sydney Smith, with little of the sentiment of the character, faithfully and most ably discharged its duties. He won immediately the confidence of his rough parishioners, talking, with those who could talk of nothing else, about bullocks, runts and turnips; and, whenever he had the opportunity, giving them the best practical instruction, and enforcing his recommendations of prudence, economy, forethought and mutual kindness, by the example of an united, industrious and well-managed family at the parsonage-house. He cured the sick amongst his poor neighbours, he established gardens for spade cultivation by the poor, stimulated their horticulture by offering prizes for the best-kept and most productive ground, made experiments to test the cost and worth of different kinds of diet, and, not having the fear of the exciseman before his eyes, dared to make his own candles from the fat of his own sheep. He did not forget the duties of hospitality, and his parsonage, ugly as it was, and spite of the plainness of its deal furniture where mahogany should be, had the honour of receiving earls and countesses and squires of each degree, and judges and counsellors and London wits, who better enjoyed the entertainments of that country parson's festive wit, than they would the hospitality of a bishop's palace or a nobleman's hall. But, in honour to his hospitality, we must not omit to mention, and with its fitting meed of praise, his annual custom to invite once a year the most respectable farmers of the district to dine with him and the ladies of his household. With exquisite tact he drew from each guest his sense and knowledge, and at the close of a cheerful day sent each home a wiser and a better man, respecting himself and more kindly disposed to his parson, and impressed with the importance of that respectability which he knew had been his own passport to the feast of the day. Years of tranquil happiness passed on. Limited as his means were, he lived within his income, educated his family, and

acquired for himself by his writings, chiefly in the *Edinburgh Review*, fame and some little money. By visits amongst the gentry of Yorkshire, and occasionally to London and Edinburgh, he gratified the passion for society which grew with his years and his increasing means.

Foston had, in clerical eyes, one advantage,—it was not infested by Dissenters. Liberal as Sydney Smith was, he was not free from the clerical feeling of satisfaction at having no spiritual interference with his little flock. With Dissenters he had but small acquaintance, and, when speaking or writing of them, was accustomed to indulge in strange rhodomontade, as if they were a parcel of wild fanatics; but possibly in all this he was indulging grave irony by assuming “for the nonce” language intended to ridicule clerical ideas touching Nonconformists. An anecdote which came to our knowledge at the time when the circumstance occurred, some thirty years ago, tells not unfavourably for his pastoral vigilance and prudence. There lived at that time in the city of York a worthy mechanic named John Mason, a man of clear intellect and strong religious convictions (a General Baptist). He was an itinerant preacher at Cawood, Welburn and other villages. By some accident, he became acquainted with a person living in Foston, who opened his cottage to him as a preacher. The circumstance became known to the rector. He did not do what in similar circumstances other clergymen have done, fire a battery of intimidation on the parishioner thus opening the door to schism, but took a wiser and, as the result proved, a more effectual course. On the following Saturday evening, as the aged itinerant approached Foston, the rector met him, entered into a friendly conversation with him, asked him what his opinions on religious matters were, and why he came to preach at Foston. John Mason dwelt largely on his views of the paternal character of God and on practical religion, and said that his only object in preaching at Foston was to make his hearers wiser men and better Christians. The rector told him that for many years he had been aiming at the same result and by not dissimilar instruction, and advised the old man to go elsewhere, where there was greater need of such religious teaching than at Foston. The interview was conducted throughout with temper and even kindness, and at its close they parted with increased mutual respect. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that Foston did not become a permanent station of the missionary from York.

It is little to the honour of the Whig gentry possessing Church patronage, that for a quarter of a century one of the ablest expounders of their noble political principles, as well as the wittiest and wisest man of his day, was allowed to remain in his clay-bound parish, preaching in a little church, plain as a barn, to a

score or two of unlettered rustics.* Such facts do not tell well for the Church-establishment system of England, and are much against Sydney Smith's favourite argument in behalf of that system. If any man had earned one of the highest prizes of the ecclesiastical lottery, it was himself, and yet he toiled on till near the close of life one of the "inferior clergy." It will be a lasting reproach to the Whigs (whom we honour highly, though we do not think them faultless) that they did not, when they came into successive years of power, make Sydney Smith a Bishop. Falstaff said, "If to be fat be to be hated, then are Pharaoh's lean kine to be loved;" and the friends of the neglected parson of Foston might say, "If to be witty is to be excluded from the bench, then make every dunce with forty-parson power of dulness a Bishop." Sydney uttered again and again his "*Nolo Episcopari*," while he complained of the neglect of his political friends in not giving him the opportunity of magnanimously refusing a mitre. Would he have refused it, if offered? Perhaps not, though he professed, and perhaps believed, that if offered and accepted by him it would have for ever destroyed his peace and comfort. To have entered late in life, and with singularly marked antecedents, on episcopal life, would have been a severe trial of his prudence and courage. It is certain that his elevation to the bench would have raised an angry cry from a thousand clergymen, men who cling to genuine Toryism when everybody else is ashamed of it. It is possible that, like other men supposed before their elevation to be gifted with courage, he might under such a trial of his nerves have quailed, or at all events there would have been the danger of his sinking Sydney Smith in *the Bishop*. We rejoice, for his own sake and his country's, to which his fame is a proud possession, that he was not put to the trial.

Although no mitre was destined to descend on his noble head, the time was at hand when ease and wealth were to be his lot. It will always tell to the credit of Lord Lyndhurst that in the case of Sydney Smith he rose superior to political antipathies, and conferred a prebendal stall in the cathedral of Bristol on the champion wit of the Whig party. This was in 1828. Perhaps we shall be nearer the mark if we do not ascribe political antipathies at all to a man of Lord Lyndhurst's distinguished intellectual powers, but rather say he admired and honoured in another the consistency and disinterestedness which had not been illustrated in his own remarkably prosperous career.

In the following year, Sydney Smith was enabled (and here, too, the kind-hearted Tory Chancellor stood his friend) to exchange the living in Yorkshire for that of Combe Florey, in the

* The temporary holding of the valuable living of Londesborough, which he kept warm for a few years for one of the Howard family, does not materially affect this statement.

vale of Taunton. The name of his new rectory, like that which he had left, was perfectly descriptive. He left a cold, ungenial soil for an earthly paradise. His constructive talents were again called into play, for he found the rectory of Combe Florey sadly dilapidated. He set cheerfully to work on its restoration; and having now abundant means (from family as well as ecclesiastical sources) at his command, he, by the expenditure of £2000, erected one of the most comfortable and charming of parsonage-houses.

But a great domestic sorrow, one which somewhat clouded his after life, now awaited him, in the death, on the 14th of April, 1829, of his son Douglas, who is described as giving promise of all that such a father as his could wish in a son.

When the Whigs came into office in 1830, and Lord Grey, Sydney Smith's personal friend and correspondent, became Premier, high ecclesiastical preferment was confidently anticipated for the canon of Bristol and the rector of Combe Florey. That anticipation was in part fulfilled in the following year by his being appointed to a canonry in St. Paul's. Both at St. Paul's and at Bristol, Sydney Smith sustained and elevated his reputation as an eloquent preacher, and as a fearless utterer of truths strange to clerical ears from clerical lips. At Bristol, he preached to the bigoted members of the corporation of that intensely anti-catholic city, a noble sermon on behalf of religious toleration, finishing with the fine rabbinical story, quoted by Jeremy Taylor, of Abraham sitting in his tent.

A letter to Lady Grey discloses the interesting fact that, as a prebend of St. Paul's, Sydney Smith preached (doubtless mentioning the author's name) Channing's fine sermon on War in that cathedral. The letter bears date March 27th, 1844, and incidentally discloses the admiration felt for Channing by the late Earl Grey.

"My dear Lady Grey,—I think Channing an admirable writer. So much sense and eloquence! such a command of language! Yet admirable as his sermon on war is, I have the vanity to think my own equally good, quite as sensible, quite as eloquent, as full of good principle and fine language; and you will be the more inclined to agree with me in this comparison, when I tell you that I preached in St. Paul's the identical sermon which Lord Grey so much admires. I thought I could not write anything half so good, so I preached Channing."—II. 528.

If any Unitarian minister is disposed to repay the compliment offered to our faith by this preaching of Channing in the metropolitan cathedral by one of its dignitaries, we will suggest and extract a passage which we should like to hear uttered from every pulpit in the land. It occurs in a letter to his friend and coadjutor (in the *Edinburgh Review*), Francis Horner, and he has occasion to speak of some friends known to his correspondent, who, he says, "are become a little more Methodistical."

"I endeavour to give them more cheerful ideas of religion; to teach

them that God is not a jealous, childish, merciless tyrant; that he is best served by a regular tenor of good actions,—not by bad singing, ill-composed prayers, and eternal apprehensions. But the luxury of false religion is to be unhappy!"

Lady Holland speaks with great enthusiasm of her father's elocution, both in the pulpit and elsewhere. That he was a remarkably clear and energetic speaker, that the tones of his voice were powerful and even rich, is certain. But he was far from being a finished elocutionist. He wanted variety, and was especially deficient in the means of expressing pathos, and in the gentle arts of persuasion. His powerful logic, expressed in nervous language, with a large infusion of pure Saxon, came pouring forth like an impetuous torrent. The hearer felt overthrown and carried away: resistance was impossible. This effect was greatly aided by Sydney Smith's robust frame and characteristic action. He stood like a gigantic athlete, perfectly fearless in the consciousness of his power and skill. When he began his argument, the blows were dexterously aimed, and fell with irresistible weight; he paused for a moment for his opponent to rise, and then the slashing operation was repeated and renewed, until every spectator felt there was no life left in the beaten fallacy or falsehood. Never did his elocution fall on the ear with a more startling effect, than when, in 1824, at the spring assizes, he entered as sheriff's chaplain the pulpit of York Minster, and before an assembly both choice and numerous, amidst a stillness that was most unusual, he began his text, "Sittest thou here to judge me after the law, and commandest thou me to be smitten contrary to the law?" If the patriot-preacher had been speaking in the presence of a Jefferies and his parasite colleague Sir Robt. Wright, his attitude could scarcely have been more menacing, or the tones of his voice partaken more of the sound of human thunder. The surprised look of the Judges we shall not soon forget. Had not the ermine of good Mr. Justice Bayley, who sat immediately below the startling preacher, been free from every stain, he might, like Felix, have trembled before the modern Paul, denouncing as "the worst enemy of mankind" the unjust Judge.

We can scarcely sympathize with Sydney Smith's repugnance to continuing a writer of reviews after he became "a dignitary of the Church." He somewhere speaks ironically of the great work of Church dignitaries being to look after their digestion. But, to be serious, it was not less his duty as a dignified clergyman "to fight against evil," which was the motive that previously induced him to write. He had, as he himself was wont to remark, good grounds for self-satisfaction in having set on foot the *Edinburgh Review* in evil times, in having borne patiently the reproach and poverty which his writings brought him, and, on the retrospect of all that he had written, seeing that

he had nothing to retract, and no intemperance or violence with which to reproach himself. The mere anonymous form of reviews was no sufficient reason for his throwing aside the critic's pen. In fact, Sydney Smith's writings never were anonymous. The writer was always patent. It was "*Aut Morus, aut Diabolus!*" There was, as Lord Grenville told Lord Holland, when speaking admiringly of Peter Plymley, an approach to affectation in attempting to conceal under any disguise his authorship.

His principal work after his retirement from the Edinburgh Review, was his Letters to Archdeacon Singleton. We can admire as much as any one the light wit and the powerful eloquence of these compositions. We can sympathize, too, with the burning indignation which they manifest against the bench of Bishops, and especially against Charles James of London, willing, in times fraught with danger to the Church, to buy the reputation of being Church reformers by throwing out as a tub to the angry whale the patronage of Deans and Prebendaries, in the hope of preserving all the immunities of the higher order of Bishops. But we cannot admit the substantial justice of that system of "unequal division and lottery of preferment" for which these letters plead; and had it been Sydney Smith's fate to remain to the close of his life one of the inferior clergy, we can well imagine how, with irrefutable logic and terrible scorn, he would have fastened on and torn to pieces the poor fallacy, that because by an equitable division of Church property you cannot provide as liberally as you would wish for all the working clergy, you are to leave the mass of them hopelessly poor, deceived with the vain hope of getting a Church prize. Another capital objection to these Letters is enhanced by the fact of their coming from a Church dignitary. They ignore all the high motives and spiritual aspirations which unquestionably lead some men, the purest and noblest of their order and their race, to seek the clerical office. That the clergy, like other men, must live, is true; that some amongst them think only or chiefly of the loaves and fishes, is perhaps not less true; but we cannot conceal from ourselves that an injury is done to good morals, when it is gravely argued that the clerical order in England is kept efficiently up by the appeal which the Church Establishment, as now constituted, makes to "the gambling propensities of human nature," clerical as well as lay. If the statement be true, so much the worse; it is high time to try to bring about a better state of things. The defender of so coarse a principle ought to have been some grasping pluralist, whose life had been a continued worship of self. We could ill spare such a reputation as Sydney Smith's for such a work as this.

"Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?
Who would not weep, if *Articus* were he?"

The closing years of Sydney Smith were happy, and nearly to

the last, when bodily infirmities pressed on him, brilliant. In his grand climacteric he became a rich man by the death of his youngest brother Courtenay, who had amassed a huge fortune in India. A few months before his decease, he wrote in this cheerful, grateful strain :

“I am seventy-four years of age; and being Canon of St. Paul’s in London, and a rector of a parish in the country, my time is divided equally between town and country. I am living amongst the best society in the Metropolis, and at ease in my circumstances; in tolerable health, a mild Whig, a tolerating Churchman, and much given to talking, laughing, and noise. I dine with the rich in London, and physic the poor in the country; passing from the sauces of Dives to the sores of Lazarus. I am, upon the whole, a happy man; have found the world an entertaining world, and am thankful to Providence for the part allotted to me in it.”—II. 532.

Disease of the heart brought on water on the chest, and he died on the 22nd of February, 1845, “at peace with himself and all the world.” His last hours might be honestly cheered by the thought that he had faithfully devoted the great talents given him by God for the comfort and blessing of his family and for the good of mankind, and that he left the world wiser, happier and better, for his exertions to improve it.

It has been said by somebody that great powers of wit in a man and extraordinary beauty in a woman, terribly increase the powers of temptation and the difficulty of faithfully performing the social duties. Certainly the characters of our great English wits are not particularly loveable. Horace Walpole was of a cold and chilling temperament. Swift was, if not insane, one of the most heartless and worthless of his race. Of Foote’s morals we cannot say much. Sheridan was, as to the duties of life, everything that a husband and a father ought not to be. Theodore Hook was, apart from his wit and imaginative powers, a weak, wretched being, whose career was a series of degradations. With social talents and powers of adorning, amusing and instructing society equal to any and all of these remarkable men, Sydney Smith presents to us the example of a man of finely-balanced mind, of morals unimpeachably pure, of warm social and domestic affections, and of an expansive benevolence under the direction of the shrewdest common sense.

The Letters which compose the second volume are as full of vigorous sense and kindly feeling as they are of fun and humour. Our first extract is from a letter addressed to a Lady. The female sex were a portion of God’s creation whom he honoured with unswerving loyalty, and whose claims to an equal share of every intellectual and social privilege with the lords of the creation he vindicated by his precepts and habitually illustrated in his own practice. He thus writes, in 1841, to Lady Ashburton:

“You have very naturally, my dear Lady Ashburton, referred to me

for some information respecting St. Anthony. The principal anecdotes related of him are, that he was rather careless of his diet; and that, instead of confining himself to boiled mutton and a little wine and water, he ate of side-dishes, and drank two glasses of sherry, and refused to lead a life of great care and circumspection, such as his constitution required. The consequence was, that his friends were often alarmed at his health; and the medical men of Jerusalem and Jericho were in constant requisition, taking exorbitant fees, and doing him little good.

"You ought to be very thankful to me (Lord Ashburton and yourself) for resisting as firmly and honourably as I do, my desire to offer myself at the Grange; but my health is so indifferent, and my spirits so low, and I am so old and half-dead, that I am mere lumber; so that I can only inflict myself upon the Mildmays, who are accustomed to Mr. —; and I dare not appear before one who crosses the seas to arrange the destinies of nations, and to chain up in bonds of peace the angry passions of the people of the earth.

"Still I can preach a little; and I wish you had witnessed, the other day at St. Paul's, my incredible boldness in attacking the Puseyites. I told them that they made the Christian religion a religion of postures and ceremonies, of circumflexions and genuflexions, of garments and vestures, of ostentation and parade; that they took up title of mint and cummin, and neglected the weightier matters of the law,—justice, mercy, and the duties of life; and so forth."—II. 458, 459.

We close with a letter of an earlier date to the lady of Lord Holland, equally honourable to her and to the poet Campbell whom she desired to assist.

"My dear Lady Holland,—I told the little poet, after the proper softenings of wine, dinner, flattery, repeating his verses, etc. etc., that a friend of mine wished to lend him some money, and I begged him to take it. The poet said that he had a very sacred and serious notion of the duties of independence, that he thought he had no right to be burdensome to others from the mere apprehensions of evil, and that he was in no immediate want. If it was necessary, he would ask me hereafter for the money without scruple; and that the knowing he *had* such resources in reserve, was a great comfort to him. This was very sensible and very honourable to him, nor had he the slightest feeling of affront on the subject, but, on the contrary, of great gratitude to his benefactor, whose name I did not mention, as the money was not received; I therefore cancel your draft, and will call upon you, if he calls upon me. This, I presume, meets your approbation. I had a great deal of conversation with him, and he is a much more sensible man than I had any idea of. I have received this morning a very kind letter from Sir Francis Baring, almost amounting to a promise that I am to be a professor in his new Institution.

"I cannot conclude my letter without telling you, that you are a very good lady for what you have done; and that, for it, I give you my hearty benediction. Respectfully and sincerely yours,

SYDNEY SMITH."

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE LATE REV. MICHAEL MAURICE.

SIR,

YOUR No. for July, 1855, has just been forwarded to me by an unknown friend, drawing my attention to the "Memoir of the late Rev. Michael Maurice" which it contains.

Cordially uniting as I do with the author of that Memoir in the affectionate remembrance of Mr. Maurice's fervent piety and exalted worth, I may be permitted, in the interests of truth, to add my testimony upon one most essential point; and I trust that you will publish my present communication, for the perusal of all those who have read the Memoir.

The dying bed of an aged servant of God is confessedly the most important passage of his course on earth, and it was my privilege to attend Mr. Maurice constantly during the latter stages of his life. Together we sought comfort in the Word of God, and communed of His kingdom and of the life to come; we approached the throne of grace together; and never at any time were his faculties so enfeebled by sickness or dimmed by his great age, as to render him unable to take his part in prayer. Invariably, when I had ceased, he would take up the prayer, and continue for a length of time in a strain simple, earnest, comprehensive and exalted. He used fewer words as death drew near, and the last consecutive sentences I ever heard from his lips, were uttered in the discharge of this his self-imposed exercise of adding something to my prayer at his bed-side. Whatever his bodily weakness, there was abundant evidence that in spiritual things "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."

And how did he pray? Sometimes he offered his supplications to "God in Christ," sometimes "through Christ," and sometimes to Christ; nor did he ever fail to bring that holy name explicitly forward in one way or the other, as acknowledging the Godhead of Christ; and he clung with childlike simplicity and reverence to the doctrine of the Atonement through His blood. I am told that the last words he was distinctly heard to utter were those of our Church Liturgy—"Lord, have mercy upon me; *Christ*, have mercy upon me." At least a year before his death, having previously declared to his dying partner his full agreement with her in the attachment she entertained to the doctrines of our Church, he had partaken of the Holy Communion of the Saviour's body and blood, according to the ritual of the Church of England, and accepted therein a confession of faith which leaves no doubt as to the views which he considered most scriptural. His regular attendance at the service of our Church during the last years of his life, and his often-repeated desire for my pastoral ministrations when he could no longer leave his room, proved something more than a passive acquiescence in the form of doctrine which he thus deliberately preferred. At the same time, I must add that I never heard him speak of his earlier opinions on this subject. As far as I could judge, he seemed always to enjoy the light he had at the time, and always to be looking onward with childlike readiness for more.

I believe, from inquiry, that there is some mistake as to the account given of Mr. Maurice's enforced separation from the Southampton Bible

Society, which never took place at all as described; and, further, I think that injustice has been done to Mr. Maurice in accusing him, as your Memoir does, of hiding his light (p. 410), swerving from the line of religious integrity (p. 414), and compromising his own religious convictions (p. 416).

As a Minister of the Established Church, I worship Christ as God, and believe that the shedding of His blood blots out all my sins; but whether I, or those who believe differently, are right or wrong in the interpretation of Scripture on these points, must be left to the judgment of Christ Himself at His coming. It is not the question now, whether Mr. Maurice was right in adopting these views at the close of a long life, but whether he was sincere. Did he go honestly through the successive stages of toleration, respect, acquiescence, attachment, and finally of absorbing confidence and undivided faith, in the doctrine of the Atonement and Divine nature of the Son of God? I believe he was most sincere throughout; and if I am right, then the imputations of hiding, deserting or compromising his convictions, are scattered to the winds, and one noble sentence of Milton's will solve all—

Opinion, in good men, is but knowledge in the making.

In the making of that knowledge our friend lived, a faithful student of the Word of God, but not enlightened equally at every stage. When he came to "know Christ," he died, and passed safe (solely, as I believe, through the possession of that knowledge) out of the shadows of life into the light of eternity.

We contend, Mr. Editor, on different sides of the great question (touching the soul's salvation) which admits of no compromise; but we are on one side the grave, he is on the other; and by giving my testimony a place in your pages, we can unite in one last act of justice and brotherly kindness to one who was equally honoured by the companions of his earlier and his latter days.

I am, Sir, very truly yours,

JOHN PHILIP GELL,
Incumbent of St. John's, Notting Hill.

INTELLIGENCE.

MANCHESTER NEW COLLEGE, LONDON— CONCLUSION OF THE EXAMINATION.

We were unable in our last No. to give any account of the last day's proceedings. We now supply the deficiency.

On Thursday, June 28th, the examination of the undergraduates took place in the presence of Rev. John Kenrick, the Visitor, and other Trustees. The Greek and Latin classes were examined by Mr. J. Addyes Scott,—the senior class in the Leptines of Demosthenes, and the Agricola, Germania, and 1st book of the Histories of Tacitus; and the junior class in the Hellenics of Xenophon, book i., and in Cicero pro

Milone. The examination was on the whole highly satisfactory. The examination of the Mathematical classes was conducted by Mr. Richard Hutton. The senior class was examined in the first six books of Euclid and the 11th book; also in Geometry, Arithmetic, and Algebra as far as Quadratic Equations, Plane Trigonometry as far as the solution of Plane triangles and the elements of Conic Sections. The junior class was examined in the 1st book of Euclid, Arithmetic, Arithmetical and Geometrical Progression, and Algebra as far as Simple Equations. It will be understood that the undergraduate students of Manchester New College

attend the lectures of University College in Classics and Mathematics. There is a manifest inconvenience (though under the circumstances unavoidable) in students being examined by any but the Professor who has instructed them. He alone can know the ground traversed by the pupils. A foreign examiner must necessarily put some of the more minute and specific questions in uncertainty as to their fitness. It was with the knowledge of this difficulty that the Committee gave directions for the examination of the undergraduates. Making due allowance for the relations of the students and their examiners, the examination was regarded as generally satisfactory. That some, at least, of the students of Manchester New College have made very good use of their advantages at University College, has also subsequently been made to appear by the list of honours awarded in the annual distribution of prizes. Thus Mr. T. Holland gained the second prize and second certificate in the higher junior Mathematical class, Mr. J. Dare gained in the Mathematical class (lower junior) the prize and first certificate; in Latin, the seventh certificate, equal with two other; and in the junior Greek, the eighth certificate. Mr. Upton gained in the junior Latin the second prize and second certificate, and also the second prize and second certificate in the junior Greek. Another satisfactory proof of the attainments of several of the undergraduates of Manchester New College, was afforded in the position taken by them in the matriculation examinations of the University of London. All the students from Manchester New College passed in the first division, viz., Mr. Percy Bakewell, Mr. Joseph Dare, Mr. George Heavside and Mr. Charles Barnes Upton. We also observe with satisfaction that Mr. E. S. Howse, who is a candidate for admission to Manchester New College as a divinity student, has matriculated in the first division.

The general meeting of Trustees of Manchester College was held in the Library of University Hall in the afternoon of June the 28th, the chair being taken by the President, Jas. Heywood, Esq., M.P. Reports from the Professors respecting each student on the foundation were handed in, and, being of a highly satisfactory kind, all were re-admitted. The cases of some new candidates for admission were considered. A conversation was held re-

specting the advisableness and practicability of making the junction of the University Hall and Manchester New College still closer, affording greater facilities to the students of the latter for residence in the Hall. No proposition on the subject was offered for the acceptance of the Trustees, the object being to elicit the opinions of Trustees for the guidance of the Committee. On the motion of Mr. Mark Philips, the Trustees passed a vote of cordial thanks to the Rev. John Kenrick, for the admirable address which, as Visitor, he had delivered the previous day, with the request that he would allow it to be printed. It will be seen that Mr. Kenrick has complied with this request, and made our Magazine the medium of communication with the public. It was resolved that the Committee should be requested to make arrangements for instructions in Elocution being given to the students in the early part of next session. After a vote of thanks to the President for his services in the chair, the meeting broke up. The distributors of Jones's Fund immediately after met, and made a considerable number of grants to ministers.—In the evening, the rooms of University Hall were thrown open for a *soirée* of the friends of Manchester College, and were filled with a numerous and brilliant circle of visitors. The guests were received in the Library by Principal Tayler and Rev. G. V. and Mrs. Smith. Thus were the proceedings of a very satisfactory week brought to a close.

PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, CARMARTHEN.

The annual examination at this College commenced on Tuesday, the 19th of June, in the presence of a numerous company of spectators and friends of the College, among whom were many of the old students. The examination was conducted by the deputation from the Presbyterian Board, aided in the Mathematical and Philosophical department by Dr. Davies, of Frwdvale. The deputation consisted of the Revs. D. Davison, M.A., Henry Solly and T. L. Marshall.

On the Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, the students were examined in Classics; on Wednesday afternoon, in Oriental and Modern Languages; and on Thursday, in subjects connected with the Theological department. A sermon was preached on Thursday evening by Mr. Shelley, and on Friday

morning by Mr. William Thomas, one of the senior students.

On Friday, at eleven a.m., the Rev. D. Davison proceeded to distribute among the successful students five very valuable prizes, furnished by the liberality of Lewis Loyd, Esq., Overstone Park, Northamptonshire. Presents of books were also made to all the students, as a mark of approbation of their general good conduct and progress in the different subjects to which their attention had been directed during the session. Mr. Davison concluded this part of the proceedings by a very excellent and appropriate address to the young men. The state of his health prevented him from entering very fully into the results of the examination, and he therefore left this part of the work to his coadjutors. He, however, expressed himself much gratified with the general proficiency of the students; and feelingly alluded to the deep interest he had felt for more than a quarter of a century in the welfare and efficiency of the College,—a College which had proved the *practicability* of conveying scientific and religious instruction on the most liberal and unsectarian principles. In concluding, Mr. Davison stated that he had great pleasure in announcing that Samuel Sharpe, Esq., of London, had expressed an intention of giving books to the value of £5 as prizes (one of £3 and one of £2), at the end of next session, to the two students who should be thought to have the greatest knowledge of "Biblical History, Geography and Antiquities."

This part of the business having been concluded, the Rev. H. Solly addressed the students at considerable length and in an earnest and able manner, advertising to the great progress most of them had made since last session, and to the very great pleasure he felt in listening to the two sermons; that of Mr. Shelley had been delivered in a very able and impressive manner, and that of Mr. Thomas displayed much thought and general information as to theological subjects. Mr. Solly then entered into a minute and careful criticism of these sermons, and made some very valuable suggestions on the composition of sermons and *efficient preaching*. Mr. Solly concluded his very impressive address by urging the young men ever to keep in view the *great end* of all education, to fit and prepare them efficiently to

discharge the important duties of the Christian ministry.

Mr. Solly, on Friday evening, delivered an exceedingly effective address, in the public rooms, on Total Abstinence from Intoxicating Drinks, to a very large audience; and on the following Sunday preached at Llwyn-rhydowen, Cardiganshire (followed by Dr. Lloyd, in Welsh), to a congregation of 400 or 500 people.

The first prize was awarded to Mr. William Thomas; the second, to Mr. John Lloyd; the third, to Mr. Thomas Davies; the fourth, to Mr. R. H. Roberts; the fifth, to Mr. Lewis James.

There are at present in the College twenty-six students.

D.

SOUTH WALES UNITARIAN TRACT SOCIETY.

The annual meeting of the South Wales Unitarian Tract Society took place on Wednesday and Thursday, the 28th and 29th of June, at Capel-y-groes, Cardiganshire. The services on Wednesday commenced at 3 p.m., at Rhyd-y-gwyn, when the devotional part was conducted by the Rev. Titus Evans, Carmarthen, and when two very able sermons were preached by the Rev. John James, Gellyonnen, and the Rev. J. E. Jones, Bridgend.

The services began on Thursday morning at Capel-y-groes, at 10 a.m., when prayer was offered by the Rev. David Beynon, St. Clears, and when the Rev. Owen Evans, of Cefn, Merthyr, delivered a powerful sermon from the text, "No man cometh to the Father except through me."

After the sermon, the Rev. Rees Davies, the minister of these congregations, was called upon to occupy the chair during the discussion of the subject proposed for consideration at the previous meeting, which was, "What is meant in the New Testament by *Heresy*?"

At 3 p.m., the Rev. John James conducted the devotional services, and Dr. Lloyd, of Carmarthen, preached from Matt. xii. 50, "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother."

The congregations were unusually large, and seemed to feel deeply the powerful influence of our simple faith.

D.